
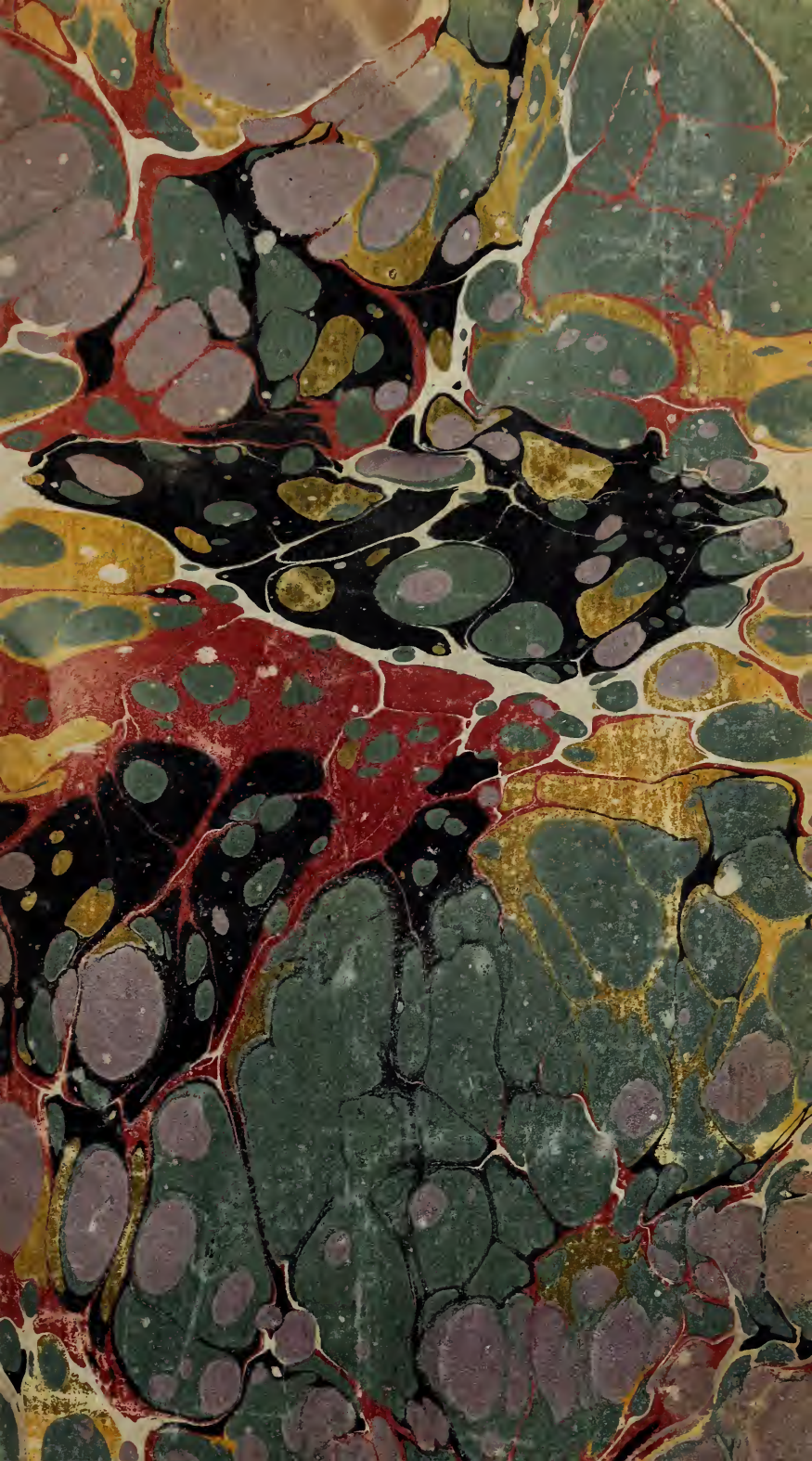






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THE
HISTORY
OF
MISS GREVILLE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
INTERESTING MEMOIRS.

CKEIR, MRS. SUSANNA HARVEY
VOLUME FIRST.

L O N D O N :

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Vol.1

March 4. 1902—
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G.L.M. 29/XII/38

T O

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

The COUNTESS of GLASGOW.

MADAM,

TO obtain the Patronage of the GREAT, is a common ambition: Mine aspires to a much nobler object, that of deserving the approbation of the GOOD.

THE friendship with which your Ladyship has long honoured me, while it gratifies this desire, inspires likewise the sincere wish more and more to merit the continuance of it.

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As

As a public testimony of respect due to your character, as well as of my sense of numberless obligations, I dedicate to you, MADAM, the following sheets.

THEY contain a story intended to combat a prejudice very frequently entertained in early life,—That none but a first attachment can be a happy one.———And to inculcate a truth of the last importance to society,—That honour, gratitude, and above all, a sense of religion, are sufficient to conquer even the most ardent passion, when to indulge it is no longer consistent with virtue.

SUCH an attempt will, I flatter myself, meet the approbation of
one,

one, who proves by daily experience, that piety and benevolence are the surest foundations of universal esteem, as well as the best security for domestic happiness.

I am,

MADAM,

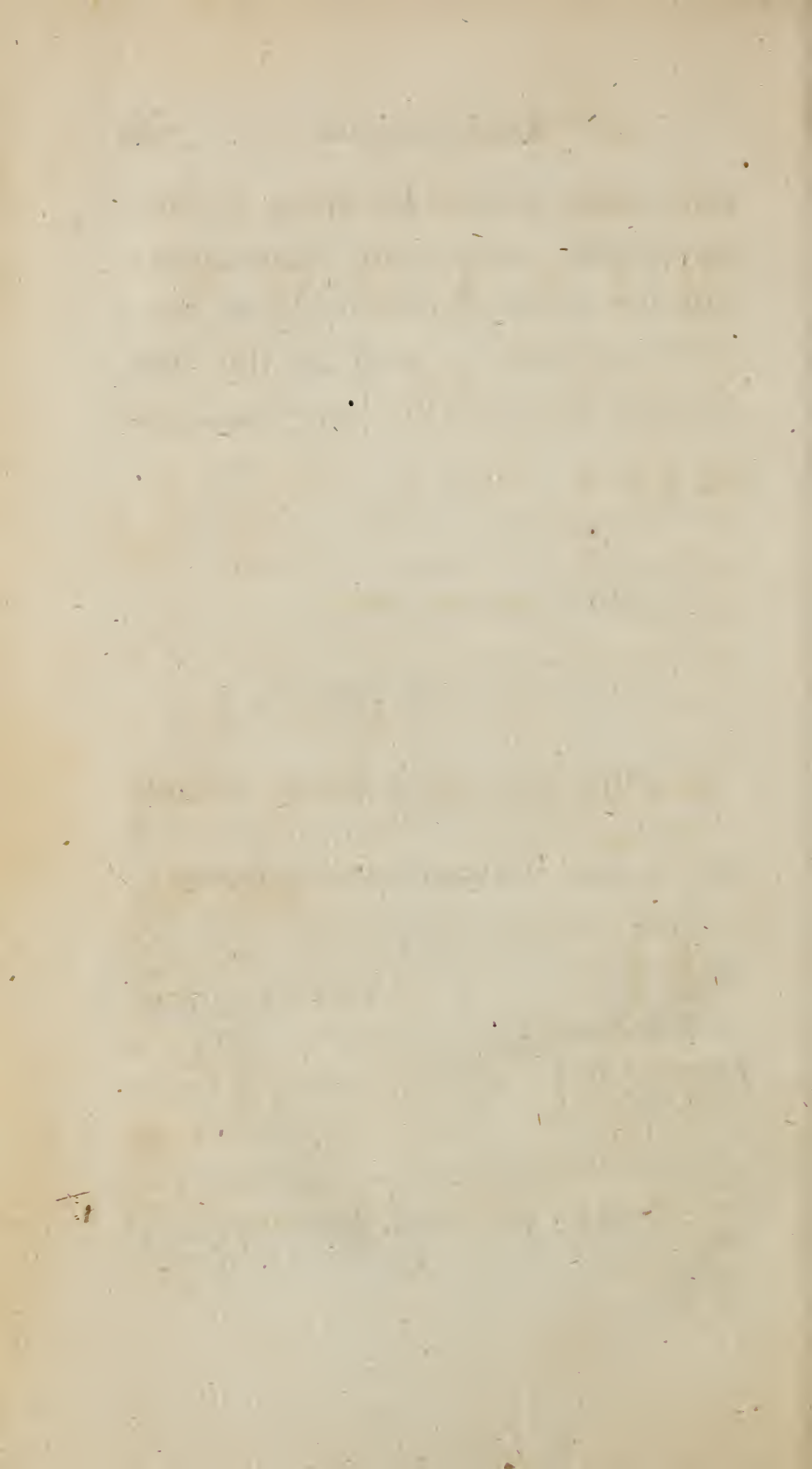
with the greatest respect,

your Ladyship's sincere friend,

and obliged humble servant,

The AUTHOR.

EDINBURGH, }
April 20. 1787. }



THE
HISTORY
OF
MISS GREVILLE.

LETTER I.

*From Mrs Helen Maria Stanley, to Miss
Lucy Herbert.*

Stanley Farm.

‘ **H**EAVENS! I hear my dear girl
‘ exclaim as she unfolds this letter,
‘ is there then no region of the earth that
‘ can defend one from the teasing imper-
‘ tinence of old useless maiden-aunts? —
‘ After having preached away every par-
‘ ticle of my patience in the country, must
Vol. I. A ‘ she

‘ she follow me to the metropolis, and,
‘ in the very center of pleasure, intrude
‘ on me with antiquated instructions, and
‘ tiresome reprehension of faults, which
‘ exist only in her memory, and which I
‘ have forgotten an age ago ?’

My Lucy will do me the justice to own, that if I do intrude on her sometimes in consequence of the trust reposed in me by her dying mother, it is not to indulge my own splenetic humour, or restless itch for talking ; but with a view to correct those little foibles, which others less tenderly interested in her happiness, would suffer to increase till habit had confirmed them faults ; and to render her as completely amiable, as she is handsome.

Admiration, independent of esteem, must ever be a short-lived sentiment. To excite it, is an ambition unworthy of a reasonable woman. Would we aspire to
be

be generally admired, we must study to become truly estimable.

A celebrated Writer says justly, ‘ A woman can be handsome only one way, but may be agreeable a thousand ways.’ May I not add, that a handsome woman can be disagreeable a thousand ways, unknown to the generality of her sex?

It is certain, that we are always inclined to give the mind credit for dispositions suitable to the fine form it inhabits; and as we rely on the countenance as a letter of recommendation, we are peculiarly disgusted when we read in the manners and the heart, a character that bears no resemblance to it.

You tell me, that you are resolved to rescue old maids from the odium long thrown on that respectable order of females; ‘ and to insure your success, are

‘ to set me up as a model.’ How can I so properly justify your partiality, or prove myself worthy of the title of a respectable old maid, as by striving to form the young ones to shine in those characters which providence may allot them?

Your’s, my Lucy, will, I trust, in due time, be that of a wife ; at once the most agreeable and important in society. Yet lest it should prove otherwise, it is fit you should study to acquire in early life, that command of temper, complacency of manners, and humble opinion of yourself, which are peculiarly necessary for the comfort and ease of a woman destined to pass her time chiefly with those of her own sex ; and whose prospects are not varied, nor hours enlivened with the endearing tenderness of a husband and children.

These

These prospects, my Lucy, once were mine. You are not wholly unacquainted with the fatal event that blasted them for ever. You have heard the name of Howard, connected with all that was gallant and generous; you have heard his untimely fate lamented by many who had not the happiness of knowing him. Ah my Lucy! neither time, sorrow, nor disappointment, have yet so entirely extinguished the tender remembrances ever awakened by that name, as to suffer me to write it without a tear.

You know that the best and bravest of mankind fell at the very moment of victory, when love and fortune united to crown his wishes, and reward his toils.— But you know not—I trust you will never know, a grief so poignant as that his loss occasioned; which reduced me at first to despair, and clouded all my subsequent years with sorrow.

His death left a void in my heart, which nothing but the dear hope of a reunion with him could supply. His virtues for ever hallowed by memory, were the standard by which I judged of all my succeeding admirers. How did their merits shrink into insignificance by the comparison ! The sickening contrast increased my dislike to marriage so much, that it justified me in my own opinion from the charge of caprice, on dismissing the several candidates for my favour. And time, whilst it diminished the violence of my sorrow, gave a tenderness to it, that suited the natural seriousness of my temper, and rendered the recollection of the past my chief enjoyment.

From a heart thus softened, but not soured by disappointment, my dear girl may ever expect to meet with indulgence; and though at fifty-six I have an undisputed right to assume the name, I am re-
solved.

solved for ever to abjure the weaknesses too often connected with the character, of an old maid. Having enough to employ me at home, I will neither pry into the motives, nor censure the actions of those around me; I will neither declaim on the virtues of the past age, nor the vices of the present. I will be a pleased spectator in those scenes of innocent amusement, where I cannot with propriety assume an active part; be a ready partner to the dead man at whist; promote cross purposes to the utmost of my abilities; instruct my nieces and nephews in the complicated science of country-dances, and even at times assist in guiding them through the figure.

I will flee the company of masters and misses, who dread the eye of a maiden-aunt, as they would that of a basilisk; and court their little brothers and sisters in the nursery, where a game at romps, and

a few sugar plumbs, will never fail to make me a favourite.

Thus, harmless and inoffensive, though not distinguished, I hope to pass the remaining part of life: If obscure, at least innocent, untainted by calumny, undisturbed by ambition, unembittered by reproach.

I confess, however, my Lucy, I am not exempted from what some reckon the weakness of our nature; I mean the desire of being remembered after death. By the constant exercise of the gentle and social virtues, I wish to merit the praise of friendship, and the tear of humanity.

And though no tender parent, disconsolate husband, or duteous child, shall pay that slender tribute to my cold remains, my heart relies on some faithful friend (some generous Lucy perhaps) for snatching
ing

ing my memory from oblivion, and pronouncing, if deserved, my panegyric, in some such terms as these :

‘ Her life was spent in doing good ;
‘ in discovering and correcting her own
‘ errors, and in pitying and concealing
‘ those of others. She wept for the un-
‘ happy, and contributed to their relief :
‘ she trembled for the guilty, and prayed
‘ for their conversion : she rejoiced with
‘ the prosperous, and reminded them to
‘ be grateful. She was desirous of good
‘ will, but sought not applause : satisfied
‘ with doing her duty, she left the re-
‘ ward of it to Heaven. The hope of
‘ immortality, made life supportable ; and
‘ the sense of her own frailty, render-
‘ ed death welcome. The last sigh she
‘ breathed, was for herself ; the last
‘ prayer she uttered, was for her species ;
‘ and she quitted the world, without
‘ having

‘ having made an enemy, or lost a
 ‘ friend.’

May such, my dear Lucy, be my funeral oration! You will tell me, I am arrogant to expect it: At least, let me strive to deserve it.

It is time to dismiss this engrossing subject of self. Without trusting my pen with another, I will commission it to assure you of the lasting and tender attachment of your affectionate aunt,

HELEN-MARIA STANLEY.

LETTER II.

From Miss Lucy Herbert to Mrs Helen-Maria Stanley.

London.

IN vain, dearest aunt! in vain do you paint the various satisfactions of the maiden state, its blissful exemption from
 cares

cares and crosses, its unruffled quiet, and unenvied repose.—Positively ‘ I’ll none of it,’ even after reading your description. Whoever repeats your eulogium, may some Pope, Swift, or Warburton, of the next century, do justice to my memory, and perpetuate my fame, in terms to this effect :

‘ Her life was spent in doing nothing;
‘ in discovering her own faults, which she
‘ was at no pains to correct, and which
‘ she strove to lessen, by exaggerating
‘ those of others. She wept when she
‘ beheld a prettier woman than herself;
‘ she trembled when she heard her praised;
‘ she rejoiced when she was seized with
‘ the small-pox. She was desirous of a
‘ number of admirers, but shunned choos-
‘ ing a husband : satisfied with the reput-
‘ ation of beauty, she was indifferent
‘ about securing its reward. The hope
‘ of leading the fashion, made her support
‘ the

‘ the impertinence of fools she despised;
 ‘ and the sense of her own accomplish-
 ‘ ments, made her receive the grossest
 ‘ flattery as her due. The last sigh she
 ‘ breathed, was for the loss of her beauty;
 ‘ the last prayer she uttered, was for an
 ‘ encrease of her fortune; which not
 ‘ having obtained, she quitted the world
 ‘ in a pet, without caring for any she left
 ‘ behind her, whether enemies or friends.’

I see you stare, and shake your head,
 exclaiming as you take off your spectacles,
 ‘ Poor girl! I thought how it would be
 ‘ when she quitted Stanley farm:—See,
 ‘ brother, what comes of London journies
 ‘ to girls of eighteen! Your favourite
 ‘ neice might be a great-grandmother in
 ‘ folly—she is ruined beyond redemption.’

Softly, my dear aunt! you really know
 nothing of the world; and to be ignorant
 of the world, is briefly to be good for
 nothing.

nothing. What signifies all you have read and taught me, and all I have heard and remembered? The instructions we receive in the country, if followed in town, would render us ridiculous; and the virtues inculcated in infancy, by the time we grow up, have no longer an existence.

You admonished me, ‘to improve my time.’ Not one moment of time have I found since the instant of my arrival.—‘To be diligent in my duty.’ There is no other in London, but pleasure.—‘To love my enemies.’ Here, all profess themselves my friends.—‘To respect my superiors.’ Every one I meet, is my humble servant.—‘To observe the golden rule.’ Here, the universal maxim is, Care for nobody but thyself.

Besides, every thing is regulated by fashion; and fashion is as arbitrary as the one sex, and as fickle as the other. Thus,

Vol. I.

B

when

when you was young, (forgive me), it was fashionable to love one's relations, read controversy, be a Whig or a Tory, and go to church of a Sunday.—Now, it is vulgar to have a single relation in the world; and scandalous, at table, to drink the health even of your dearest friend. No books are read, but novels; no party embraced, but that which can procure a pension; no adoration paid, but to women; and no church frequented at all.

In your time, it was fashionable to have a large forehead, a straight waist, and short nails.—Now, a large forehead would exclude one from company; a straight waist be a reflection on one's understanding; and short nails render one infamous in all polite circles.

To convince you, however, that all your cares have not been thrown away, and that I am as ready as ever to receive good advice,

advice, and even sometimes to follow it, I invite you to point out to me those faults, which, you may be assured, I shall never discover without your assistance; and I will then shew you, by my readiness to abjure them, that I am, even in London, your grateful, dutiful, and affectionate niece,

LUCY HERBERT.

LETTER III.

*From Mrs Helen-Maria Stanley to Miss
Lucy Herbert.*

Stanley Farm.

I THANK my dear girl for her lively epistle, and the intelligence it conveys with respect to her progress in the grand mystery of the way of the world.

Should your future bear any proportion to your late improvements, I will

B 2

venture

venture to prophesy, before you reach your twenty-first year, that you will outshine all who have gone before you, in the practice, as well as the knowledge, of every fashionable folly.

But, to be serious, my dear Lucy;—in compliance with a request dictated at once by good sense and affection, I am resolved to let no opportunity escape, of testifying my friendship, by reproving your errors. Think not, however, that all my letters shall be in the monitorial stile,—an unpleasing one to myself: No. My delight will be, to watch the dawning of virtue in your bosom; to remove whatever might obstruct its progress; and to encourage its advancement in this imperfect state, towards that complete excellence it will attain in a better.

I shall begin my plan of improvement, then, with telling you, that when you
were

were last at Stanley-farm, I remarked with pain, a certain severity and imperiousness in your tone and manner, when speaking to your servants. To a mind not absolutely debased and insensible, a state of servitude must be a source of continual mortification. How galling to feel one's self a slave to the capricious humours of a person perhaps every way one's inferior, except in those external circumstances bestowed by Providence for general advantage; but perverted by such characters, to the sad purpose of rendering misery and discontent more general! If we possess generous and honest minds, we will feel a desire to render others happy, increase with the conviction that they rely for happiness on our aid. It is in our power to render our domestics not only happier, but more virtuous, by our treatment of them, which ought to be equally remote from haughtiness and familiarity.

Treat your maid as your companion, and she will soon become your mistress; treat her with humanity and reserve, and she will prove your friend.

The opinion the world forms of characters, especially in high life, has often no better foundation than the reports of servants. Of how great importance then is it to a young Lady, to secure the esteem and affection of her domestics, not by mean condescension, or improper indulgence, but by affable and gentle manners, and shewing a constant regard to their ease and quiet.

I am flattered by your confidence, my dear Lucy! and charmed with that noble ingenuity you discovered, in confessing to me those weaknesses which are to be found in every human character, but which few, very few at your early age, are either at pains to detect or reform. Yet, what time
so

so proper for that arduous task. as the spring of life, when the tender mind, uncorrupted by commerce with the world, and unfettered by evil habits, is peculiarly susceptible of every virtuous impression?—that spring, which, improved or neglected, will return no more!

My dear girl! I love—I admire,—but I wish to do more,—I wish perfectly to esteem you: I aspire to banish from one of nature's most finished works, those small, but too perceptible blemishes, which throw at times a shade over the whole piece. How grateful shall I be, should Heaven permit me to become instrumental in forming your character; in teaching you, instead of valuing yourself on the circumstance of birth, beauty or fortune, to aspire after the superior advantages of a well regulated mind, ---a contented heart, ---and, the most beautiful of all ornaments, a meek and quiet spirit.

You

You desire me to tell you your faults ; but I have never yet discovered any thing in you that deserves so harsh a name. Those little fallies of temper, and that petulant manner which I have chiefly in view to correct, are merely the effects of youth, a warm imagination, and even of that sensibility by means of which I hope to see you one day become the most amiable of women.

I confess, however, in one instance, I remarked a degree of frowardness in your behaviour to the best of fathers, that would merit severe censure were it ever to be repeated. I am sure you would shrink from the idea of giving pain to any one ; how much more to a fond indulgent father, who is ever solicitous to give you pleasure !

My Lucy ! should you live to know the value of such a parent, by weeping over his grave, how would the sorrows of
nature

nature be embittered to anguish, should you have reason to accuse yourself of the slightest omission of duty towards him! In such a situation, every error swells into a crime; and our regrets are redoubled by the cruel reflection, that we are for ever deprived of power to repair them.

If the Almighty hath spared him to be the guide of your youth, you ought to look up to him at all times for direction; and, conscious that he has your interest solely at heart, to submit chearfully to any restraints which his superior prudence and experience oblige him to impose.

Reflect above all, that, deprived of a beloved wife, to you, and your sister, Heaven commits the peace and comfort of your widowed parent. How precious, how sacred a trust! I know you are incapable of abusing it; but you must do more; you must watch over it with tender solicitude;

citude ; you must not only obey him from a sense of duty, but learn to find your chief happiness in giving joy to his heart.

Trust me, Lucy, pleasures merely selfish can never be very delightful ; but those that tend to promote the happiness of others, are at once exquisite and ennobling.

Conscious that general remarks make a slighter impression on young minds, than particular examples, let me point out for your imitation, your sister's most engaging friend. Though her native delicacy makes her shrink from observation, yet, who is so well entitled by beauty and accomplishments, to claim it, as Miss Greville ?

Observe with what tender solicitude she watches to prevent the wishes of her affectionate mother, and is ever in search of something to please or accommodate her.

Admire

Admire that simplicity of manner, which needs no ornament to render it attractive; that affability, which flows directly from the heart; that humility, which is equally secure from giving or taking offence; and that total forgetfulness of self, in promoting the enjoyment of others, which, without courting the admiration of any, secures the favour of all.

Your cousin Harry's letter has this moment reached me, and confirmed the former disagreeable intelligence, that he must join his regiment, and immediately embark for America:—a new source, this, of anxiety, both to your uncle and me. Strive, my dear girl! to amuse our lonely hours, by writing frequently; nor fear many more such grave lectures as this.

It will be long before I find another opportunity of pointing out two foibles in one letter.—Your affectionate aunt,

HELEN-MARIA STANLEY.

LETTER IV.

Miss Herbert to Miss Greville.

London.

AFTER spending six weeks, the pleassest I have ever known, in the uninterrupted enjoyment of your society, you may believe I derived but little amusement from the sight of objects in which I took no interest, and a journey which was carrying me far from the quiet of the country, and the friend I most tenderly love.

Regret for their loss, my Julia! is the tax we must pay for all our pleasures: Yet let us beware of indulging that regret, till it degenerate into discontent; lest the Being from whom all are derived, should in anger withdraw from his ungrateful creatures, those remaining blessings which they too lightly esteem, and are at no pains to enjoy.

My

My chagrin on parting with you, was lessened, though not banished, by the vivacity of my sister, whose natural gaiety was increased by the near prospect of becoming an inhabitant of London, and sharing in all the amusements it supplies.

We were accompanied by Harry Stanley, who is a lively, agreeable creature, and does credit to the expensive education bestowed on him by his worthy father. The influence of the sexes on each other, even where no particular attachment subsists, is visible to the most superficial observer : But wherever there is one latent spark of tenderness lurking in the heart, (as I suspect is the case with Henry's), it renders a man so desirous of pleasing, as cannot fail to give new charms to his conversation.

Already he and Lucy are rambling over half the town; but as my curiosity was

partly gratified three years ago, I prefer the pleasure of conversing with my friend, to the most brilliant spectacle this vast metropolis could afford me. Believe me, Julia, not one of these can supply the sweet satisfaction I used to taste, when wandering with you amidst the silent shades of Harwood, I felt, that the sympathy of my heart, soothed in your's, those sorrows which shunned even the hallowed eye of friendship. When resting together on the mossy bank, we perused, in the works of Littleton, Milton, and Shakespeare, the affecting language of nature—the sublime flights of genius—the wild wanderings of fancy;—and in those of our favourite Thomson, all these united, with descriptions that awaken the finest sensibilities of the human heart!

I am no judge of the rules of composition; and think myself happy in every species of ignorance that defends me from
disgust:

disgust: But surely I may venture to affirm, that of all our British Poets, Thomson seems peculiarly distinguished by the art of communicating, by his descriptions, that melting tenderness, that sublime enthusiasm, with which the contemplation of her charms inspires all the true lovers of Nature.

I hope you will continue to cultivate your friendship for the muses; though in this instance alone, you appear ungrateful for the favours bestowed on you, by persisting in disclaiming all connection with them. To the eye of a Poet, every object in the country is invested with a species of beauty, hid from the vulgar; which makes its way to the heart, and renders even the most trivial interesting.

Of how much importance is it, then, to cultivate a talent, which more endears a retired life, and rural situation like your's;

gives amusement to one's self, and pleasure to others.

Indeed, my friend, Heaven seems liberally to have endued you with all those talents and dispositions requisite for your trying situation; and the exercise of which will afford you a satisfaction, of which not even that afflicting situation can deprive you. How aimable, how prepossessing, is a character like your's, where the soundness of the understanding is rendered still more estimable by the sensibility of the heart; and where the gentle affections of the latter, are ever at hand, to temper the severe awards of the former!

Do not blame me for writing to you in this stile. Nothing is farther from my intention, than to flatter my friend. My heart dictates to my pen, and from her I am not accustomed to conceal any of its dictates.—Adieu, dearest Julia! Be
careful

careful of your health, and remember how dependent on that, is the happiness of

Your truly affectionate

MARIA HERBERT.

LETTER V.

Miss Herbert to Miss Greville.

London.

THOUGH I wrote my friend by last post, I will not wait the arrival of her letter ; but strive to merit the pleasure of her correspondence, by complying with her request, and writing by every opportunity.

As you never were in London, it would be giving you little information to tell you, our house is in St James's Place.

‘ Mais c’est commode de connoître le
 ‘ lieux où sont le gens à qui l’on pense
 ‘ souvent. Ne savoir où les prendre, fait
 ‘ une obscurité qui blesse l’imagination.’

Therefore I shall briefly tell you, that this, and the neighbouring houses, have pretty little gardens, which open into the Green Park ;---a circumstance peculiarly agreeable to me, as I can enjoy a quiet walk there at an early hour, without fear of interruption from company.

I cannot approve of the custom of hurrying strangers from one spectacle to another, without giving them a moment for recollection. It is like sending travellers ‘ to ride post through Europe.’ My brain is crowded with such a variety of images, that scarce one remains distinctly impressed. I will try, however, to recollect some of those most worthy of your attention, and from time to time endeavour to amuse you with such descriptions as my imperfect memory and untutored pen can supply.

The only object which has equalled my high-raised expectations, is Westminster Abbey.

Abbey. I was too young three years ago, to pay much attention to it. Now, my admiration increases with every new survey.—With what a reverential awe did I enter that noble edifice! The magnificence of the building is sufficient to impress the mind with the most sublime ideas; but with what an infinite variety of solemn pathetic reflections are these scenes associated!—I wish for you at all times, but sicken with impatience for your loved society, when wandering alone thro' the Abbey. The sacred enthusiasm which it inspires, you, my Julia, are formed to feel and relish. Good Heaven! with what delightful sympathy would I observe the movements of your soul, in your animated countenance, while conducting you through the tombs.

At this moment I see the gaze of mingled tenderness and admiration, with which you fix your eyes on the beautiful, languishing,

guishing, dying figure of Lady Nightingale; and the melting compassion that steals through every nerve, while beholding the terror and anguish painted in the countenance of her distracted husband.

How richly fraught, my Julia, is the whole scene, with pious and solemn reflections! The scene where monarchs receive and resign their sceptres; where genius and valour are crowned with fame, and pride and power are conquered by death; where rivals, friends, and foes, sleep in peace together; where tyrants and bigots vainly plotted to enslave mankind, and Addison successfully studied to reform them.

I shall but half enjoy the wonders of this little world, in absence of my friend; but how greatly will my relish of every pleasure be increased, if, by communicating, I can teach you to share them with me!

Before

Before quitting the Abbey, which I never do without reluctance, I must inform you of a new species of entertainment which it lately afforded me. While wandering there on Saturday, my meditations were interrupted by the entrance of two persons, one of whom, in the true gossiping stile, was instructing her companion (who appeared to be a stranger) in the designs of the different monuments, and the names and qualities of the several personages who adorned them; and with whom the good woman seemed perfectly intimate. In the course of this most curious rhapsody, I knew not which to admire most, her loquacity, her ingenuity, or her ignorance. She seemed to have established it as a maxim, that ‘ the woman who de-
‘ liberates, is lost; ’ and therefore went on without hesitation, declaiming, lamenting, and moralizing, by turns; and, like death, whose register she had constituted herself, levelling all distinctions. The different
emblems

emblems of peace, plenty, time, fame, &c. stooped her rapid career a few moments; but she did not puzzle her brain, to discover what her invention could so easily supply; and contented herself with bestowing the title of Angel on every being who wore wings. After a thousand blunders too absurd to be repeated, she fixed her eyes on Shakespeare's monument, and reading the inscription,—‘ Aye, aye, exclaimed she, this was his Majesty's architect; I warrant ye he built this here Abbey, for you see he holds a scroll telling of towers, palaces, and temples.’ And (turning to Handel's) there is his trumpeter too; poor man! his wind is broken now, and it is what we must all come to.’

On approaching the tomb of Sir Isaac Newton, ‘ Look’ee there now, cried she, that there great man was the first who taught us to see light the right way, and

‘ and follow the course of the stars. You
 ‘ see he holds a comet in his hand, to shew
 ‘ he was not a bit afraid of them : And
 ‘ these fine little boys here at play around
 ‘ him (pointing to the arts and sciences)
 ‘ were every one his pupils.’

I know not in what stile of adulation
 our great philosopher may now be hailed
 by kindred spirits in heaven ; but I will
 venture to affirm, whilst on earth, his ear
 was never soothed by a strain of more su-
 blime, though simple flattery.

I fear I have tired you with this long
 letter, but the desire of amusing you has
 occasioned it. Should the chearful flow
 of my spirits at any time disagree with
 the more serious tone of your’s, check my
 impertinent fallies, my beloved Julia; and
 believe, that gaiety will ever be readily
 abjured by your friend, when it is dis-
 cordant with your pensive humour, or se-
 rious reflections. MARIA HERBERT.

LETTER VI.

Miss Herbert to Mrs Helen-Maria Stanley.

London.

WE have been thrown into the utmost consternation, my dear aunt, by the strangest accident.—Lucy, our too giddy thoughtless girl, has exposed herself to a mortification, the most painful of all others to a woman of true delicacy;—that of becoming the object of public animadversion and ridicule.

Afraid that this strange affair may reach you, with those disagreeable additions which such stories always gain from general report, she commissions me to give you an account of the whole adventure; and to assure you, that though her spirits are still much agitated by recollection of the danger in which her imprudence last night involved her, she will soon convince you,

you, by writing herself, that they have not abandoned her.

Having often expressed a great desire to go to a masquerade, in spite of my father's dislike of that entertainment, her eloquence and perseverance at length overcame his scruples, and he consented to her accompanying Sir James and Lady Melford last night to the Pantheon.

She was very elegantly dressed in a Spanish habit, ornamented with all the jewels left her by her godmother, and looked charmingly; though I could not help telling her, she had mistaken her talents, in thinking herself qualified to maintain with dignity the character of a Spaniard: But she reminded me, that no one appeared publicly in their own character, and that it was proper for her to learn, like the rest of the gay world, to assume what disguises she pleased.

My father and I supped without company, and sat very late, in expectation of her arrival. You may imagine our astonishment, when a servant of Lady Melford's knocked violently at the door, and asked eagerly, whether Miss Herbert was yet arrived? On finding she was not, he flew off like a madman, calling to John, not to inform Sir William that he had been enquiring about her.

Being in the front parlour, we heard all that passed; nor was our surprise and terror lessened, when a carriage driving furiously up to the door, a Gentleman entered, followed by a Lady, supporting Lucy, pale as death; her hair dishevelled, and her dress in the greatest disorder.

I flew to my dear sister, who seemed unable to speak. Don't be alarmed too much, Madam, said the stranger; this young Lady has been sadly frightened; but

but, she assures me, not in the least degree hurt. I hope a little quiet will restore her, and that I shall have the happiness to-morrow of finding her spirits perfectly recovered. So saying, the two strangers retired, without waiting for those acknowledgements which our extreme agitation prevented us from paying.

Having a little recovered from her terror, Lucy informed us, that just as Lady Melford's company were alighting at the door of the Pantheon, a chariot drove up with such violence, that the wheels of the two carriages were entangled, and occasioned a great bustle and disturbance.

A gentleman in a Turkish habit, alighted from the chariot, and after bestowing several hearty curses on his coachman, came up to Lady Melford, and po-

lately expressed his concern for what had happened.

He withdrew, and the company walked towards the upper end of the room. In a few minutes, he rejoined them; and continuing very assiduous about Lady Melford, she expressed a wish to know whether she had the honour of being acquainted with him. Is it possible, Madam, returned he, that you do not know me? Indeed I do not, Sir, she replied. Then, continued he in a whisper, I shall for the future have a higher opinion than formerly of my ability to deceive, since I have escaped being discovered even by the penetrating eyes of Lady Melford.

This speech convincing her that the Turk must be one of her acquaintance, she made no scruple of entering into conversation with him.

Sir

Sir James, who wore a plain domino, came up, and told Lady Melford, that he was going to join in a dance, (of which Lucy had just declared herself a great admirer).

The Turk entreated her to honour him with her hand, a favour, which, with Lady Melford's approbation, she readily granted, and away they tripped; but the room being very crowded, they could not get forward in time for the dance. Lucy then proposed returning to her company; but her partner importuned her with such earnestness to wait for the next dance, that she knew not how to refuse. Just as it was about to begin, a person in a plain domino (whom Lucy supposed to be Sir James, having never seen him till that evening) came in great haste, and told her, ' that Lady Melford was suddenly taken ill, and begged her to come to

‘ her instantly, as she must return home,
‘ and waited for her in the coach.’

Her partner presented her his hand, and she suffered him to lead her out, without once reflecting on her imprudence, in thus putting herself under the protection of a stranger. When they reached the door, Lady Melford’s servants were repeatedly called; but neither carriage nor servants appeared. She was in the utmost agitation, when another mask addressing himself to the Turk, ‘ Lady Melford, Sir,’ said he, ‘ was so ill, that she
‘ could not wait for the young Lady, but
‘ entreats you will be so good as to attend
‘ her home in a coach that waits here.’ Poor Lucy, unsuspecting of the artful snare laid for her, and under the greatest concern for her friend, suffered her partner to attend her into the carriage, who called to the coachman to drive to Sir James Melford’s in Upper Brook-street.

On

On expressing much impatience to get there, the stranger put out his head, and spoke to the coachman, who then drove very hard. Lucy, much surprised at the time they took to reach Brook-street, suddenly let down the glass, and, with equal terror and astonishment, saw herself at the end of a street terminated by the high road.

She hastily exclaimed, ‘ Good Heaven! where is the coachman carrying us?’ But, instead of making any reply, the villain who accompanied her, pulling up both the blinds, seized her hands, and began to tear off the diamond buttons from her habit.

She screamed with all her force; but the coachman either did not, or would not hear her. Having secured his booty, the wretch called to him to stop, and, jumping out, run off, leaving poor Lucy in a fainting fit. Seeing her lie lifeless on
the

the feat, the coachman at first imagined the villain had murdered her, and returned towards the street with all speed, where, observing a tavern-door still open, he stopped, and begged assistance.

The strange dress and appearance of poor Lucy, soon drew around her, not only the landlord, but all his guests. After having swallowed a glass of hartshorn in water, she became more composed, and begged the landlord to accompany her home; when a post-chaise and four passing by, the proprietor of it seeing a croud, and a number of lights assembled round a carriage, stooped to inquire what was the matter.

Having been informed of the robbery, he alighted, and advancing to the coach, very humanely expressed his concern for Lucy's distress, and begged her to accept of a seat in his carriage, and allow his sister and him to attend her home.

You

You may believe this offer was gratefully accepted; and though still sick, and trembling with the fright, our dear girl called in her way, to inform Lady Melford of her safety, whom she found in the most dreadful alarm on her account.

Her protector, Mr Somerville, and his sister, have just been here; they seem very good people, and the concern they shew about Lucy makes us forget they are strangers. I hope to-morrow she will herself be able to give you assurances of her health; you need none of the duty and respect of

Your affectionate niece,

MARIA HERBERT.

L E T -

LETTER VII.

*Miss Lucy Herbert, to Mrs Helen-Maria
Stanley.*

London.

AS there is nothing so tedious as a twice told tale, when there is not one circumstance in it that can either gratify the curiosity of the hearer, or the vanity of the reciter; you will readily forgive me for my passing over in silence, the disagreeable affair Maria has already related,

I know, and have anticipated all you can say on the subject of my imprudence, giddiness, want of thought, &c. But I have a greater respect for truth, and a juster notion of my own character, than to make promises of future amendment, which I may never be able to fulfil. Besides, I am entirely of Dr Armstrong's opinion, ' 'Tis painful thinking that corrodes our clay;' and since I have neither
time

time nor inclination for this laborious exercise, I must entreat my dear aunt to excuse me.

I plainly see, all things here are estimated by a single word—Fashion. Apply it to dress, manners, language, nay vice itself, and they instantly, as if by the power of magic, change both their name and nature. Extravagance becomes taste, licentiousness spirit, folly high-breeding, and religion nothing.

A fine face, a lively fancy, and an air of the world, qualifies one for becoming a woman of fashion, and leading all the fools in this vast metropolis: What need then for thought or reflection, which would only teach us to despise or condemn all that the gay world approves and practises?—You will doubtless expect to hear something more about our new friends (for violent friends they already profess

profess themselves) Mr and Miss Somerville of Somerville-hall.

The Squire talks like the rest of his species ; his foxes run till we are all out of breath ; his trouts have each a couple of inches added to their tails, and his partridges lay their eggs by the score.

As for Miss, she is straight from Parnassus ; and not only amuses herself like other poetesses, with rambling carelessly about the skirts of the mountain, but boldly ascends even its Pindaric heights. In spite of her fatigues, she appears so much *en bon point*, that I am persuaded the Heliconian springs must be as nourishing as they are intoxicating. Certain it is, these sons and daughters of Apollo, ‘ whose
‘ trade it is to put shackles upon good
‘ sense, and smother reason with heaps of
‘ flowers,’ swell mightily, if they do not fatten, upon praise.

For

For my part, I have always suspected the food of poets to be much a-kin to that of lovers, which, if properly annalized, would prove intrinsically lighter than air.

You ask, how we all go on? Why, just in the usual stile: My father returns from St James's loaded with promises, which are so light a burden, that the chairmen exact no fare for them. I sigh and simper by turns, whilst Maria wears a smile as settled as that of the angel Gabriel in the salutation. In short, my dear aunt! having got the squire and his sister amongst us, I may affirm that our coterie comprehends in it every variety of character; the joyous, the pensive, the serious, and the ridiculous. Conscience impertinently tells me, to which of these classes you will assign

Your troublesome niece,

LUCY HERBERT.

P. S. I wonder if conscience ever was in London, that she is so ill-bred?

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LET.

LETTER VIII.

Mrs Helen-Maria Stanley to Miss Lucy Herbert.

Stanley Farm.

IN spite of your last letter, my dear Lucy! I hope you will neither lay aside thought nor reflection, especially in London, where you will find so many subjects for the one, and such necessity for the other.

Reading, too, I would earnestly recommend to you, as the best way of occupying a part of every morning. Even after the memory is stored with truths most necessary for the conduct of life, the mental powers must be exercised, and the affections awakened by serious reflection on interesting subjects, else our minds will sink into a lethargic state, joyless to ourselves, and useless to others.

The

The mind, naturally active, when not engaged in reflection at home, seeks employment abroad ; and instead of investigating our own, the characters of others become the subject of enquiry.

We are all disposed to think better of ourselves than we deserve. We compare ourselves with those around us, and with such too as are least deserving. Prejudice and passion aggravate their foibles into faults ; self-love diminishes our own to pardonable, or even amiable weaknesses.

Satisfied that our lives are unstained by gross vices, we take no note of those lesser faults into which we daily and insensibly slide ;—faults, too, for which no excuse can be offered, because there is no temptation to the commission of them, and which might easily be avoided. Such, for instance, are the offences of the tongue.—Detraction is a vice to which our sex is

peculiarly addicted : And yet it is as easy to speak good of our neighbour, or be silent, as to speak evil ; for a good word costs as little as a bad one. Could we hope, by blaming, to amend, there would be some excuse for the frequency and severity of our strictures ; but we may find fault to the end of the world, without reforming a single person in it.

At first sight, this too common error, this harsh trait of the human heart, seems to spring from some seeds of malevolence sown there by the hand of Heaven itself. ‘ What pleasure, says the Misanthrope, ‘ could one human being find in detracting from the merit of another, unless ‘ he were naturally both envious and malicious ?’ But let us try, my dear Lucy ! whether we may not derive this propensity from a less culpable motive.

May

May not that quick sensibility, which is the foundation of the most amiable virtues, if not corrected by superior principles, betray us into a severe manner of judging? When we feel exquisitely, we express ourselves strongly; and hence, those weaknesses that excite disgust, we are more ready to revile, than to pity.

The more intimately we become acquainted with our own characters, my Lucy! the more excuses will we make for the frailties of others. It is the most important of all studies, and that in which diligence will be most secure of success. Pursue it earnestly, and daily add to the pleasure of

Your truly affectionate aunt,
HELEN-MARIA STANLEY.

LETTER IX.

*Miss Lucy Herbert to Mrs Helen-Maria
Stanley.*

London.

TO be displeased with one's self, never fails to render every object around us displeasing. I am out of humour with the whole world this morning; and you alone can reconcile me to it, by reconciling me to myself.

Poor Mrs Dale has just left me, after fatiguing me to death by a tedious repetition of grievances, which I have heard enumerated a thousand times, and which, alas! I can do nothing to relieve.

My dear aunt! I am ashamed to confess that I felt so fretfully impatient, the unhappy Lady discovered, by my restlessness and inattention, my weariness of the subject.

A piteous look, and heavy sigh, betrayed the deep anguish I had thoughtlessly inflicted. Your image stood before me; confounded and abashed, I dared not to lift my eyes, whilst, in terms to this effect, methought you admonished your faulty girl.

‘ To listen to the complaints of the
 ‘ unfortunate, is a far more difficult task
 ‘ than to relieve their necessities; yet this
 ‘ is a sacrifice humanity requires from us.
 ‘ To all, our alms cannot extend: but
 ‘ sympathy and attention may be afforded
 ‘ to all; and those whom the former cannot
 ‘ relieve, the latter may console.’

Like many others of the human race, I hope, by confession, to merit absolution; but I know, to obtain this from my ghostly mother, I must strive, by my future conduct, to make atonement for my past offence. This is my sincere resolution.

‘ Praise

‘ Praise virtue, and it will encrease.’ A word to the wife—you understand me?

In order to do penance for my sin, I visited to-day the snarling couple at Woodfort. To be always of the same opinion, I am convinced, would be the greatest of all misfortunes to married people. How could the uniform tenor of the marriage state be supported, were it not for those inspiriting varieties of temper and humour to which wedlock gives free scope? A little gentle opposition whets one’s wits; a lively altercation braces the nerves; and a brisk dispute gives an unspeakable zest to the sweets of the matrimonial banquet. Were it not so, would we see these universally practised from Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Socrates and Xantippe, down to the present hour? But though such varieties may be very salutary to the parties concerned, they certainly afford but indifferent entertainment
to

to their guests, and ought therefore to be reserved for the delectable hours of privacy.

Heavens! my dear aunt! and is this the sweet passion of Love, of which so much has been sung and said? The joy of youth,—the solace of age—the only business of life! The essence of sentiment—the soul of heroism—the bond of the universe! Possess of which, we are rich in midst of poverty, and happy in despite of nature; but without which, all the treasures, honours, and delights, on this terrestrial ball, are nothing?

Let me be poor, or rich,—honoured, or despised;—but never—oh! never let it be my fate---to marry for love!

I have just received a flighty epistle from cousin Harley, filled with love, esteem, admiration, and eternal regard. I have
paid

paid two shillings for postage ; and the contents, moderately speaking, are not worth a farthing. I pardon him, on consideration that he will soon reach France, where he will learn better manners than to remember his absent friends. Farewell ! I must dress, to attend the wedding of an old companion. Nothing, my dear aunt, is so dull as to solemnize happiness. Pleasure is of too volatile a nature, to bear being exposed to view. It resides in the heart ; and those ebullitions of it which can be expressed by the tongue, fly off in a moment : So will not the lively gratitude, and sincere affection, of your

LUCY HERBERT.

LET.

LETTER X.

Mrs Helen-Maria Stanley to Miss Lucy Herbert.

Stanley Farm.

YOU supersede the necessity of my reprehension, my dear girl, by your frank confession of your fault, and sincere resolution of amendment. Long—long may it be, ere experience teach you to know the whole weight of your offence, by the feelings of unpitied calamity. Alas! that any of the human race should add unkindness to affliction, or, by contempt, embitter the anguish of the despondent heart!

For the future, on such occasions as that you mention, let us imitate the example of our Heavenly Father, who, tho' well acquainted with all our wants and infirmities, invites us to pour out our hearts before him; because he hath so constituted
the

the human mind, that, in complaint, it finds sensible relief. Alas, my Lucy, how different is our conduct! We tire of listening to a detail of misfortunes, which can admit of no other alleviation but sympathy, and in which we ourselves may be involved before the dawn of another day.

The singular distresses in which poor Mrs Dale has been plunged, not through her own, but the fault of others, have given rise this morning to many serious reflections on our ignorance of the great and inexplicable, yet, doubtless, just and good plan of Divine Providence. Some thoughts of Bishop King's on this subject, which appeared very ingenious, occurring to my memory, I shall endeavour to communicate them to you, though not in his own words, as I have not his book by me.

‘ When we discourse of the wisdom,
 ‘ power, and justice of God, it is probable
 ‘ that

‘ that our conceptions bear no nearer
 ‘ resemblance to these attributes of the
 ‘ Deity, than the strokes on a map, to
 ‘ the mountains, cities, and rivers, which
 ‘ they are meant to represent.

‘ And were we to place a map before a
 ‘ savage, and, pointing to a set of irregular
 ‘ black strokes, call them by the names
 ‘ of the hills, lakes, or savannahs, which
 ‘ have been long familiar to his eye, he
 ‘ would be astonished at our folly, till
 ‘ science had instructed him to compre-
 ‘ hend our meaning, and adopt our lan-
 ‘ guage.’

I rejoice to hear that Miss Somerville
 has lost nothing by her late journies to
 Parnassus. I hope you did not attempt to
 lessen that self-complacency, which must
 console her under the many mortifications
 she will probably encounter in the danger-
 ous path she has chosen.

There is a wide difference, my Lucy, between flattering the weaknesses of our fellow-creatures, and wounding their self-love, by treating their opinions with contempt, and opposing their prejudices with violence.

The first is the detestable art of a little mind; the second, the humane forbearance of a benevolent heart.

The vivacity of our cousin Harley's imagination, will subject him to severe disappointments. He is one of those 'children of hope, who extract evil, both from what they gain, and what they lose; since the good they obtain, is always found to be less than expectation; and that of which they are disappointed, they suppose would have been greater.'

To make up in some measure the loss you have lately sustained, I send my dear girl,

girl, a pair of diamond ear rings, which were the gift of that amiable friend you have often heard me lament. I confess it is with intention to improve, as well as adorn you, that I make you this present. It was her custom to annex to every little ornament, the name of some virtue which she was particularly desirous of attaining, or by which those friends from whom she received them were distinguished. The words, candour, modesty, humility, and charity, were inscribed on her various trinkets, in cyphers understood only by herself: And by means of this ingenious invention, those ornaments which minister to the vanity of other young people, served with her not only as a defence against folly, but as a constant monitor to virtue.

I continue as usual,

‘ Along the cool sequester’d vale of life,
 ‘ To hold the noiseless tenor of my way.’

As we advance in our journey, my dear Lucy! self becomes our chief and most interesting study. Happy for us when it yields us pleasure! Happy, in no inconsiderable degree, when the retrospect of the past, supplies us with new vigour in forming good resolutions with regard to the future!

Adieu!—Let neither the allurements of pleasure seduce you from the path of duty, nor its difficulties relax your perseverance. Remember, our present state resembles that of a man swimming against a strong current: Whilst he continues his exertions, he will certainly advance; but if for one moment he relaxes his diligence, he will be forcibly carried back, and perhaps, by all his struggles, will never again recover what he has lost. We must press towards the goal;—to be stationary, is to be undone.

Your ever affectionate aunt,

HELEN-MARIA STANLEY.

LETTER XI.

*Miss Lucy Herbert to Mrs Helen-Maria
Stanley.*

London.

I AM in so melancholy a mood to-night, that I am fit for nothing but making my will; and I think I cannot do better, for I am expiring with vexation.

‘ Your will! What, in the name of astonishment, have you got to dispose of?’ Several articles, my good aunt! of which you stand in much need; but which, I doubt, I shall never part with as long as I live. For instance, a tolerable share of vanity—a large portion of loquacity—and abundance of spirit, which mistaken friends term *levity*.—But, to return to my grievances, this strange mortal, this Squire Somerville, has taken it into his head to fall in love with me, or rather with my

F 3

father,

father, who has undertaken to convince me, that I cannot have one reasonable objection to the man.

My dear aunt! I have a hundred and fifty; but, to a woman of your sense, one will suffice. I don't love him—I never will.

Surely he gives a very slender proof either of his prudence, or discernment, in choosing such a mate; but, I promise you, I have no ambition to become Lady of Somerville manor.

They really tease me with their impertunity. I wish fathers would remember they were once young; and that, however willingly children would obey their commands on other occasions, it is impossible to marry ‘by particular desire.’

I entreat you to join me in soliciting permission to return for some time to Stanley farm. I am quite sick of this London. The masquerade gave me a disgust for public amusements; and this impertinent Somerville has destroyed all my domestic pleasures.

Pray, my dear aunt! find some pretence for inviting me to the country: I am really mortified to see that my uncle can so long exist without his favourite niece. I wish to amuse him, especially as I imagine there is no chance of the troops being recalled from America this season, and he must have many an anxious hour on Harry's account. Pray, when did you hear from him?

I never was less disposed to write than at present. I am stupid, peevish, sple-
netic, and would give the world for a
good pretence to cry. You will tell me,
that

68 MISS GREVILLE.

that the world will furnish me with a thousand.

But, lest I should infect you with my bad humour, I will bid you adieu, with a simple truth, which is worth a million of compliments, that, in every situation, I am

Your grateful and affectionate

LUCY HERBERT.

LETTER XII.

Mrs Helen-Maria Stanley to Miss Lucy Herbert.

Stanley Farm.

CONSCIOUS of the influence my Lucy has over me, I must weigh both sides of the question, before I determine to join in a request which the prospect of again enjoying her society would readily induce me to make.

The

The same post which conveyed your last letter, brought me one from your father, and another from Maria; both of which contained such a character of Mr Somerville, and pointed out so many advantages that would accrue to your family from an alliance with him, that it would be inconsistent with my steady regard to your interest, to join with you in opposing the wishes of your father. At least I cannot consent to do so, till you have made me acquainted with your hundred and fifty reasonable objections to Mr Somerville.

That you do not yet love him, I cannot admit as one of these, since you have not had time to be sufficiently acquainted with that merit he is generally allowed to possess. That you never will love him, is a resolution founded in humour and caprice, not an objection;—a resolution which is unworthy of your good sense,
and

and which, I doubt not, you may in a little time be brought to abandon.

But, come, my Lucy! let us be more serious. There is only one, which I will allow to be not only a reasonable, but an unfurmountable objection; and much do I mistake, if the stile of your letter does not imply that this objection actually does subsist, though it is perhaps the only one you dare not adduce in defence of your resolution.

Say, then, my dear child! is not your heart already prepossessed in favour of another? Assure me only, that your favourite is worthy of such a treasure, and I will instantly become not only your convert, but advocate.—I remain ever

Your affectionate aunt,

HELEN-MARIA STANLEY.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

*Miss Lucy Herbert to Mrs Helen-Maria
Stanley.*

London.

ON certain occasions, dear aunt! we poor women resemble prisoners, surrounded and disarmed by their enemies,—neither able to fly, nor defend themselves. Allow me to tell you a story.

A young friend of mine was long engaged to a Gentleman she has since married; but family-reasons required that the affair should be kept a profound secret.

An impertinent gossip asked her one day, in presence of her mother, whether she was not soon to be the wife of Mr B.? Instead of returning an answer, the little Jesuit exclaimed in a seeming rage, ‘ I wish to Heaven Mr B. were married, for I shall never know peace till then!’ Away went the tattling Lady, and assured the

the whole world, ‘ that she had it from
 ‘ Miss ——’s own mouth, that there was
 ‘ not a word of truth in the report.’

What have you done, my cruel moni-
 tress? You have laid a snare for me, from
 which it is impossible to escape. Surely
 your eyes, if not as bright, are at least
 as penetrating as those of your namesake
 Helen, of mischievous memory. Hitherto
 none has dared to hint a suspicion (owing
 doubtless to my past discretion) of my be-
 ing capable of such folly, as to attach my-
 self to a man who has nothing but merit;
 but you have furnished me with a key,
 which has opened to me a heart I never
 before was at pains to examine, conscious
 that it contained nothing but lumber.

Well, then; what if I have discovered
 a poor little blind urchin lurking in a se-
 cret corner, into which he has slyly stolen,
 under the name of esteem, friendship, or
 some

some other of the various masks beneath which he shelters himself—Would you have the barbarity to turn him out, and expose him to the chill blasts of contempt and indifference; and, still worse, to the derision of all the great and gay world, who never in their life beheld the poor child?—You could not surely be so cruel.

But, as you say, ‘to be serious,’ I certainly have seen men, or if you will, a man, whom I not only prefer to Mr Somerville, but to all his sex.

You farther demand to know, whether this man be worthy of my heart?—A curious question enough, from a sensible aunt of fifty, to a flippant girl of eighteen!

Can you believe I would have bestowed it on him, if I had not thought he deserved it? Or, do you suppose it possi-

ble, that, having once bestowed it, I should either have eyes to see his imperfections, or a tongue to acknowledge them?

But, to be still more serious, has not the wise Author of Nature implanted in the heart of man, certain kind and social affections, which he evidently intended should be indulged, as he has supplied him with suitable and correspondent objects?—

‘ Aye ; but these affections, though not
‘ culpable in their own nature, may be-
‘ come so, by being wrong directed, or
‘ over-indulged.’——Granted. But are

we not led, by the dictates of right reason, to proportion our affection to the merit of its object? And if I have found a man superior in merit to all other men, ought I not to love him more than all the world besides?—I know not what such learned casuists as you may think of my reasoning ; but, in my opinion, I have deduced

duced the inference from the premises, in a very Lady-like and logical manner.

Reflect, my dear aunt! that it is I, not my family, that must marry Mr Somerville; and consequently that I alone ought to determine this affair, even without being obliged to produce all my 'reasonable objections.'

These I can confide to you, but to no other person alive. My prepossession is founded on a conviction that it is mutual; but as my favourite has never told me so, I may be deceived; if he even had, he might prove inconstant: You know they compare the fickleness of the female mind to winds and waves; but not being able to find in nature, any thing analogous to the caprice of men, they let all comparison alone.

I stand at present on very unfirm ground: Let it satisfy my best friend—my dear second mother,—to be assured, that my affections are not bestowed on an unworthy object: But let her be assured also, that, till that object become less deserving, they are irrevocably fixed.

Time, and happier circumstances, may enable me to be more explicit: at present, let us drop the subject. Whenever I ought to have no reserves with my dear aunt, I will have none.—For I am, sincerely, her dutiful and affectionate niece,

LUCY HERBERT.

LETTER XIV.

Mrs Helen-Maria Stanley to Miss Lucy Herbert.

Stanley Farm.

BEING absent two days on a visit, I fear my dear Lucy must have been anxious

MISS GREVILLE. 7

ous about the fate of her letter, which did not reach me till this morning : I will not delay a moment to assure my dear girl that I am perfectly satisfied with her ingenuous confession. Banish all anxiety, I beseech you ; your father's only object is the happiness of his children, and he will easily be persuaded to leave you at full liberty.

Be easy, then ; and believe that your secret is not more safe in your own breast, than in that of your truly affectionate aunt,

HELEN-MARIA STANLEY.

LETTER XV.

Miss Lucy Herbert to Mrs Helen-Maria Stanley.

London.

I DINED yesterday at Michem, and returned home full of good spirits, and a lively presentiment that a letter awaited

me. On my arrival, I tripped into the parlour, looked all around for my treasure, and found disappointment!—I reasoned down Expectation, chid Disappointment out of doors, and sent the little blue devils to their father Belzebub; but the urchins contrived to make their way back under cover of night, and tormented me in the shape of fevers, sore throats, broken bones, &c. &c.

In this dilemma, I called on the giant Reason; but no sooner did he beat them out of one quarter, than they got in at another. I then invited Fancy to assist me; but this treacherous ally, by deserting to the enemy, increased their force, and redoubled my perplexity. Religion (our forlorn hope) alone remained; but I had so often slighted her aid, that I was ashamed to invoke it. At that moment, the postman's knock was heard: Daniel entered with your letter; and the little talisman

talisman was no sooner applied to my heart, than every demon of them was exorcised in a twinkling.

I cannot describe my perplexity, on receiving no answer to my letter by return of post. My imagination was hard at work all the night, in forming conjectures concerning its fate.

The loss of the letter was her text: the hands into which it might have fallen, the first head of discourse; and the consequences thence resulting, the favourite topic, which she divided, subdivided, and insisted upon, at greater length than did any of the casuists of the last century, on the celebrated question of liberty and necessity; and, like them too, left the matter just as she found it.

Your little billet has set my mind at rest. I rely on your influence with my father;

father; and hope you will ever do so on the lively gratitude of your dutiful and affectionate

LUCY HERBERT.

LETTER XVI.

Miss Herbert to Miss Greville.

London.

I HAVE expected a letter from my friend for several weeks, with the most anxious impatience; but I am resolved to render my conviction subservient to my wishes, and to believe that any thing rather than loss of health, or want of affection to your friend, has occasioned your silence.

It will give pleasure to your benevolent heart, to hear of the keen relish with which our lively Lucy shares in the public amusements. So few things in
life

life continue long to give us pleasure, that it seems cruelty to debar young people from the moderate enjoyment of such as are innocent, whilst their chearful and unbroken spirits qualify them for relishing such entertainment as public diversions can afford.

You used to congratulate me on the opportunities my present situation would supply, of acquiring knowledge of the world; but as I esteem all knowledge vain that contributes neither to happiness nor virtue, I cannot felicitate myself on what I shall acquire, by living in a metropolis where licentiousness prevails in a degree hardly to be imagined.

Vice, whether the consequence of error or depravity, must always render human nature unamiable. Convinced that hitherto I have seen mankind in the fairest point of view, I could now wish to shut my eyes,

eyes, and exclude every ray that would serve to point out errors, which, alas! by seeing, I cannot amend.

But, however averse I am to a town life, I strive, in imitation of my best friend, to cultivate that benevolence and contentment, which, in every situation, is a spring of the most constant and pure enjoyment.

Possessed of health and competence, how cautious ought we to be, of voluntarily renouncing that peace which Heaven has intimately connected with these blessings, but which weak and wilful man so often disjoins from them!—Hitherto, my life has been a life of indulgence. I know that we are not sent into the world merely to enjoy, but to act, and even to suffer, in order to a future retribution. Ought we then to repine, because every desire is not gratified, nor every wish fulfilled?—Ah! ought we not rather to rejoice, that
those

those we presumptuously and ignorantly form, are often in mercy disappointed?

I entreat my dearest Julia to acquaint me, without delay, with the cause of her silence; for, though I strive to account for it by every circumstance which reason can suggest, I confess reason is not always a match for feeling, in the heart of

Your affectionate friend,

MARIA HERBERT.

LETTER XVII.

Miss Lucy Herbert to Mrs Helen-Maria Stanley.

London.

I AM persuaded, my dear aunt! that, in compounding the clay of which Maria and I were formed, Dame Nature committed some mistake in the distribution of the materials; allotted the several portions without rule or measure, and tossed in the
good

good qualities and failings at random. How else should Mária, without any industry of her own, come possessed of every virtue which I have laboured so long in vain to acquire?—Patience, in this region of folly, is of all others most requisite for me; but had I possessed that of Job, it must have been exhausted this night.

I had devoted the whole evening to you, resolved to evince my gratitude for your kindness, by endeavouring to amuse you: But the devil, as envious of a correspondence which employs those hours that might otherwise be spent in his service, has haunted me since tea, with two spiteful fiends in the shape of fine Ladies, who have exhausted the whole court-calendar of scandal, stunned me with noise, and hardly left me in possession of a single idea, but what relates to flowers, flounces, and feathers. Indeed the outside frippery of their heads, seems an exact epitome of
the

the furniture within. Heavens! what a purgatory must it be, to pass one's life in such company!

I flew to my harpsichord the moment they were gone, but my soul was out of tune; for although reading and music are now become my chief amusements, one requires to be in a better temper than I was mistress of, to relish either.

Since my last, I have passed some days most agreeably with our friends at Michem. They inhabit the very house that Sir Walter Raleigh inhabited, before his relish of life was embittered by the severity of Elizabeth, whom he had served with fidelity, and the perfidy of court friends, who envied his glory, and triumphed in his ruin.

Is there not something elevating to the mind, in contemplating the scenes of great actions, and visiting the residences of great

men? For my part, I felt an inch taller t'other day, on passing Runny-Mede*; and tasted a sublime melancholy, in viewing, at Battersea, the desolate mansion,

Where, nobly pensive, St John sat, and thought.

We were accompanied to Hampton-Court, by your acquaintance Mr Carey and his family: It was diverting to see their different characters displayed in the several objects of their admiration. The noble mirrors attracted Mrs Carey's attention; and the tarnished gold and silver tissue furniture, excited the astonishment of Miss. The young Squire thought it incumbent 'to have a taste,' and affecting the virtuoso, pronounced on the merits of the several pictures, in a manner that delighted himself, and scandalized all the company: Whilst I, with looks of pleased self-importance, asked our guide (or rather master

* Where Magna Charta was obtained from King John by the Barons.

master of ceremonies, who had all the politeness of a courtier of sixty), ‘ whether such a countenance was not thought uncommonly expressive; such an attitude, stiff and ungraceful; such colouring, too high; and such a group, finely disposed?’

The old gentleman looked at me with attention, and told me ‘ he supposed I had been abroad.’ I pardoned his mistake most readily, and answered, ‘ I was ‘ from Scotland.’ ‘ The Scotch, Madam, ‘ have always been celebrated for literature, and love of the fine arts.’—Few ‘ English, like you Sir,’ replied I with a low curtsy, ‘ are so just as to allow them ‘ their due praise; but liberality of sentiment ever accompanies superior judgment.’—The old courtier bowed profoundly, and we parted in high good humour with ourselves and each other.

It is, methinks, by such little complacencies as these, which cherish benevolence, without doing violence to ingenuity, that we should mutually sweeten the cup of life, instead of mingling in it, the founts of spleen, or bitterness of contempt.

In the evening, we had a delightful sail to Twickenham, the scene which gave birth to the finest poems, and afforded a retreat to one of the most distinguished authors our nation has yet produced. I no longer wonder, however, that rural subjects were so seldom the themes of this admirable poet. It is amidst the sequestered haunts of simple nature, we are to look for those compositions, of which a display of the tender passions makes a chief and interesting part. The banks of the Thames were suited to the Essays of Pope, for there he could study mankind: But those of the Sylvan Tweed, accorded far better with
the

the Seasons of Thomson, since, to paint men such as he wished, it was necessary sometimes to forget what they are.

In the gardens, there is a monument of Pope's filial piety, which pleased me greatly. It is an obelisk in a grove of trees, with an inscription in Latin to this effect:

' Ah! Editha! best of mothers—most affectionate of women, farewell!'

The language of nature is ever pathetic. That of my heart, is, that I love you entirely; and wish to repay your maternal care, by daily becoming more worthy of your affection.

LUCY HERBERT.

LETTER XVIII.

Mrs Helen-Maria Stanley to Miss Lucy Herbert.

Stanley Farm.

I CONFESS, my Lucy, it gives me peculiar pleasure to learn that reading and music are now become your favourite amusements.

I am convinced, that as we advance in the journey of life, and objects of sense lose with their novelty, the power of pleasing, it behoves us to cultivate a taste for social, rational, and intellectual pleasures; lest finding nothing in this world to hope or enjoy, we grow impatient under the burden of life, and weary of the way.

I went this morning to visit an old Lady, who, from dislike of that circumstance, is out of humour with herself and
the

the whole world. She is ever contrasting her present retired—or as she terms it, neglected and forlorn situation, with those happy times when youth and beauty drew around her a circle of admirers. These times are gone: And having neglected to cultivate those virtues proper to create respect, she finds nothing to supply that empty adulation which formerly constituted her enjoyment.

It requires a peculiar strength of mind to grow old with a good grace, especially after having been an object of admiration; and this art, like all others, to be perfect, must be acquired in youth.

To cherish the desolating thought of our own insignificance, is to be miserable. We never can become entirely so, but by our own fault: And however self-love may clothe this complaint in the garb of humility, it usually springs from the two
most

most bitter roots of human corruption, pride and discontent.

I hear that a much celebrated philosopher is just quitting life; and though he betrays no concern about the fate of his soul, whose future existence he has ever professed to disbelieve, he is extremely anxious about his literary fame, which he fears may be injured by some of his contemporary writers.—Had I been present when he expressed these fears, I would have repeated to him the words of Marcus Antoninus, who, being a heathen, would have commanded some attention.

‘ Those who pursue a surviving fame,
 ‘ do not consider that posterity will be
 ‘ just such as our contemporaries, whose
 ‘ manners we scarcely can bear; and that
 ‘ they too will be mortal.’

Perhaps

Perhaps my dear girl imagines that the fine Lady is a species of women only to be found in London? You are mistaken; I had a visit this morning from as fine a Lady as ever glittered at St James's. The flighty nothingness of her conversation, was truly diverting: Fortunately she took it all upon herself; for your grave old aunt was not able to keep pace with her sudden transitions from grief to joy, and joy to grief; nor could I tenderly sympathize in her various disappointments, occasioned by drunk drivers, insolvent footmen, extravagant cooks, and aukward chambermaids. In former times, I might have been mortified by being obliged to maintain so long a silence: But I was satisfied, that, by listening to her foolish grievances, I afforded my guest more satisfaction than I possibly could have done by haranguing to her with the eloquence of a Cicero.

I do not wonder that you covet patience, especially in a scene where it is so frequently required. Humility, too, my Lucy, ought ever to be its attendant. Pride swells the mind, as wind does the body with the appearance of health, but brings no nourishment to the springs of life. Humility is like the dew of Heaven, which falls unperceived on the tender plants, and nourishes them till they attain to their utmost perfection.

How various are the tastes of the human race! and how uncandid are we in condemning those which do not accord with our own! Often since I have enjoyed the pleasure of uninterrupted quiet, I have been tempted to think half the world lunatic: And yet, did not Providence wisely diversify the pursuits of mankind, what endless competitions, what destructive quarrels, would continually disturb the peace and order of society!

After

After having judged, by your own experience, my Lucy, of the short-lived pleasures arising from a life of fashionable amusement, I trust you will be better qualified for partaking in those sober ones which retirement supplies to

Your old, but not ill-natured aunt,
HELEN-MARIA STANLEY.

LETTER XIX.

Miss Greville to Miss Herbert.

Harwood.

I HAVE practised no small degree of self-denial, Maria, in so long forbearing to address you; but the blank occasioned here by your absence, has thrown a gloom over my mind which I cannot shake off. My hours are become tedious, my amusements insipid; and I wander through the delightful shades of Harwood without perceiving their beauty, or being
soothed

soothed to peace by their silence and solitude.

I confess that it seems ungenerous in your friend, to repine at an event that gives satisfaction to all connected with your worthy father. His late appointment is indeed highly advantageous to the interests of his family ; but, in excuse for my selfish regrets, allow me to express my fears, that after being accustomed in the country to fine air, exercise, and a regular mode of living, the health of my dearest friend may be endangered by the necessity she will be under (from Sir William's public character) of complying with fashionable hours, and fashionable manners, however unnatural and disagreeable.

That best of fathers, too, must, at his advanced years, suffer much inconvenience from that close attention to business which his important office demands. His
life

life is too valuable to be sacrificed, either to views of private emolument, or public advantage: But, is it thus I shall merit forgiveness, by committing new offences against friendship? and, instead of arming my gentle Maria with the courage requisite for engaging at nineteen, in the cares of a family, and hurry of public life, to alarm her already too apprehensive mind, with fancied dangers, and possible evils?—Pardon a conduct so unworthy of your friend. Whatever situation Providence allots us, is undoubtedly best calculated for our usefulness in this short life, as well as our preparation for that which shall know no period.

We are all prone, Maria, to forget the nature of our present state, and the purpose for which it was appointed. Instead of training our minds to a chearful acquiescence in the determinations of Infinite Wisdom, we are continually laying schemes

for imaginary happiness, seeking rest amidst a scene of toil, and grasping at pleasure, which our blind excesses convert into pain. We spurn temperate enjoyments, which alone are suited to our nature and situation; and by our vain efforts to obtain those that are exquisite, destroy that balance of the mind on which both its peace and safety depend.

Thus hath experience taught your Julia to reason; but, oh! what experience will teach us aright to feel?

Not even to you, the friend of my secret soul, have I yet unburdened all my woes. Those which we cannot remember without anguish, we hope to banish by silence. Vain expectation! Every moment of quiet, they claim as their own; and the restraint we impose on ourselves, only leaves Memory more leisure to collect a multitude of dismal reflections (which
the

the various occupations of life had a while dissipated) to overwhelm the mind with redoubled violence.

You have seen me struggling to support one loved parent, under the affliction occasioned by the unkind neglect and extravagance of another. You have witnessed the care with which I have laboured to conceal my father's misconduct from the world; and beheld me turning away my eyes from faults too apparent to escape either the observation or blame of others.

But, ah Maria! you have not known, that amidst such accumulated sorrows, one wound more deep, more painful than all the rest, rankled unseen in the inmost recesses of my heart, and poisoned every enjoyment. For human frailties we can find a thousand excuses, especially when duty aids compassion, in throwing a veil over them: But alas! what charity can

excuse, what veil conceal, what sympathy relieve, the heart-piercing wounds of treachery and ingratitude?—Fain would I lay open these wounds to my friend; but the shame of having been deceived—of having imposed on myself—of foolishly believing the hearts of others as sincere as my own—Oh Maria! how mortifying is the confession of an error of which either vanity or credulity is the source! how poignant the anguish inflicted by deceit! how lasting the regrets it occasions! —One day, perhaps, my friend will know all:—one day I may find courage;—at present, I must drop my pen, and give vent to those sorrows for which alone I ought to blush.—Farewell, dearest Maria! Never---oh! never---may anguish like mine destroy the peace of my amiable friend.

JULIA GREVILLE.

LET-

LETTER XX.

Miss Herbert to Miss Greville.

London.

YOUR melancholy letter afflicted, but did not surprise me. During my last visit at Harwood, I remarked with pain, the extreme depression of your spirits ;—a depression, for which even your domestic inquietudes could not account. However afflicting those sorrows may be, which have nothing of tenderness connected with them, custom brings the mind to be so far reconciled to them, as to bear them with patience and submission ; and as we naturally incline to flee from what is disagreeable, we seek in absence, business or amusement, to bury the remembrance of misfortunes, which are at once bitter and irremediable.—Not so the tender sorrows of the heart. On these we dwell delighted : these we cherish with jealous care ;

nor can we be brought to abandon them, for all that the world calls pleasure.

Though delicacy has hitherto prevented every enquiry, you, who know the ardor of my attachment, cannot wonder that my curiosity should be excited, by observing your deep and settled melancholy ; but many other circumstances concurred to awaken it, and confirm my suspicion, that your confidence in me was not unbounded.

Of this, however, I had no right to complain : that with which you honoured me, was far superior to my desert ; and, even in friendship, there may be cases where concealment becomes a virtue.— The first thing that roused my attention, was an occurrence very trifling in itself, but consequently more striking, from the effect it had on you.

We

We were walking together in the garden. On entering a little arbour near the side of the river, you left me to go in search of a linnet's nest you had discovered there the preceding evening. I rose to follow you, when observing, at a small distance, a beautiful young laurel inclosed with a hedge of thorn, I stopped to pull a sprig of it, which, soon after, without thinking, I threw into the water. The moment you perceived this, you changed colour; and reaching across the river, with some risk, by the help of a branch from a neighbouring tree, recovered the sprig, which you put in your bosom, repeating, with a low voice, and a deep sigh, 'Alas! ill-fated emblem.' All this, you imagined, had passed unregarded, as I was returning towards the arbour. I presently joined you, but took no notice of what I had observed.

As soon as we entered the parlour, your father, who was reading the newspapers aloud to your mother, stopped to ask her whether Lord Cleveland's youngest son did not belong to one of the regiments engaged at the siege of Charlestown? On her answering in the affirmative, you turned pale as death, and instantly quitted the room. But your father continuing to read the account of the siege, no one except myself, paid any attention to what had passed.

I frequently observed that you watched the arrival of the news-papers, and eagerly glanced them over at a window, when I alone was in the parlour; but always shunned being present when they were read aloud: That you never asked any questions concerning affairs in America, and seemed quite uneasy and apprehensive when they became the subject of conversation. But what struck me most, was
your

your behaviour one morning, when a Gentleman having mentioned that several regiments were ordered home, you seemed to forget that any one was present, and eagerly exclaimed, ‘ Good Heavens! can Lord M—s be of that number?’ Then observing your father’s eye suddenly turned towards you, I saw you overwhelmed with confusion, which was visibly increased by his answering in the affirmative.

Such, my Julia, are the circumstances to which I referred, and you may imagine what are the conjectures to which they unavoidably lead. Were I not invited by the conclusion of your letter, to demand that share of your secret griefs to which the most faithful amity entitles me, far rather would I be denied the delightful pleasure of alleviating them by my sympathy, than renew or increase their violence, by leading you to the mournful repetition. But I will hope, that, by dividing,

viding, you will lessen the burden of your sorrows. Haste, then, beloved friend of my heart, and pour them into that compassionate bosom, which will hold most sacred the precious deposit; which will conceal from an unfeeling world, those sentiments the sons of Interest deem romance, and the votaries of Pleasure enthusiasm; but which the uncorrupted children of Nature experience to be happiness. For, is there not ‘a joy in grief, when peace dwells in the soul of the mourner?’—a joy more exquisite, more refined, more ennobling, than all that Luxury can invent, or Fortune bestow? There is my Julia: And by laying open your heart to me without reserve, you will bestow that joy on your faithful sympathizing friend,

MARIA HERBERT.

LET-

LETTER XXI.

Miss Greville to Miss Herbert.

Harwood.

YES, Maria! memory ever kind and faithful, has treasured up every dear remembrance connected with the secret of my heart. Yes, I recollect each circumstance you mention, though then unnoted by all as I imagined, except her whose love and grief rendered them important.

But, let me unfold the sad story with which they are connected. About three years ago, Lord Cleveland, whose fine seat, the Grove, is only a mile from hence, came with his family to reside there during the summer. My father, as his nearest neighbour, waited on him soon after his arrival; and my Lord, with much politeness, returned the visit immediately; expressing at the same time, an obliging desire

fire that the younger part of the two families should lay aside ceremony, and, like good neighbours, be much together. Nothing could have been more agreeable to my mother and me, than this kind intimation of his wishes: But, alas! they were frustrated by one whose name it pains me to mention with disrespect.

The character of my father, and the licentious company with whom his house was constantly crouded, had undoubtedly prevented Lord Cleveland from cultivating any further acquaintance with him. Indeed he so plainly shunned it, that it put it out of my mother's power to introduce her daughter into a family, whose known worth, and amiable manners, promised her those advantages in the way of society, to which her birth entitled her; but of which she was deprived by her unfortunate circumstances. Denied the comfort of domestic enjoyment, and unable always to support

support the affliction of a mother I fondly loved, I used frequently to amuse myself with riding round the neighbouring estates, which present an assemblage of natural beauties scarcely to be equalled in any part of this kingdom. Ever passionately fond of such scenes, when I met with any particularly striking, I used to alight, and sending the servant and horses a little way before me, take my solitary ramble as fancy or chance directed, and indulge without restraint my melancholy reflections. One day when engaged in an excursion of this kind, my thoughts being wholly occupied by the distresses in which my father's misconduct was daily more and more involving us, my horse quitting the road, struck off into a path shaded with fine oaks, round which, egg-lantine, and other odoriferous shrubs, winded in great profusion, and enriched the air with the most delicious perfume. This circumstance led me to conjecture,

that we were near the house of Lord Cleveland; but, on the servant assuring me that the Grove was at least a mile distant, and it being then very early, I continued my course through the wood. At the end of it, I found my progress interrupted by a river that appeared too deep to ford, but over which some planks were laid for the convenience of foot passengers. On the opposite side arose several ridges of rocks beautifully diversified, and towering one above another in the form of pyramids. The banks were covered with variety of trees, among which the glowing berries of the mountain-ash formed a charming contrast with the verdant leaves; and the whole scene wore an aspect so romantically wild, that I could not resist my desire to take a nearer survey of it. Accordingly, having left the horses and servant, with some difficulty I made my way across the planks, and entered a narrow path, which could only admit one person
at

at a time, and winded among the rocks and trees, till it landed me on a height, commanding one of the grandest prospects I ever beheld. I stopt to contemplate it : I was never weary of gazing ; but I lost part of my enjoyment, by having no body to whom I could communicate the delightful emotions it excited. I thought myself in fairy-land ; and the solitude around me gave a feeling of security to my mind, that made me insensibly indulge my meditations longer than usual. The want of a living companion, led me to apply to one of those silent delightful friends, with whom I was accustomed to travel. Recollecting, at that moment, that Thomson's Poem of the Seasons had been my study the preceding evening, I pulled it out of my pocket, and found there a lively description of the whole surrounding scenery.

Retiring into a hermitage in a more shaded part of the wood, which was cover-

ed with moss, and adorned with antick roots of trees, I sat down, and closing my book, resigned myself to ‘ the dream confused of careless solitude.’ From this, however, I was suddenly roused, by the appearance of a Gentleman who came out from another part of the wood, and on seeing me, stood still, as if afraid of disturbing me. I started up in the greatest confusion; and, on recollecting the solitariness of the place, felt my surprise and agitation increased by my fear. I hastily turned back towards the narrow path, which I had some difficulty in finding; and the steepness of the descent added so much to the tremor which had seized me, that I was almost afraid to venture across the planks. I made the attempt however; but my head growing giddy before I reached the opposite side, my foot slipped, and I fell into the water. The first thing I recollect, was waking as from a dream, and finding myself supported in the arms
of

of a stranger, who gazed on me with an earnestness that exceedingly disconcerted me, and an astonishment at least equal to my own. I trembled so violently, that I could not attempt rising. He politely withdrew to a little distance, begged me to be composed, and entreated to know how he could be farther serviceable; expressed the most tender regret for the accident which he feared his intrusion had occasioned, and with that anxious curiosity which politeness restrained, but could not conquer, hinted his surprise at finding a person of my appearance, at so early an hour, without any attendant, in a place so sequestered.

I did not affect concealment; but simply told him, that I had left home earlier than usual; and, invited by the serenity of the morning, and the beauty of that spot where he first saw me, had been induced to trespass against good manners perhaps,

by a mistake of my servant, who had assured me I was more than a mile from the Grove.

‘ The servant is right, Madam,’ replied Mr Rivers, (for it was Lord Cleveland’s youngest son that now spoke to me): ‘ This place is seldom visited by any of the family, because of its distance from the house ; but for that very reason is my favourite haunt, when I incline to prefer my own thoughts to the conversation of others.’—After thanking Mr Rivers for that humanity to which I was indebted for my preservation, I attempted to rise; but had the mortification to feel that I had sprained my ankle so violently, that I could not put my foot to the ground without extreme pain. Mr Rivers, in a tone of the kindest compassion, expressed his grief for the accident, and fears for my safety ; and after again seating me gently on the ground, begged permission to dispatch my servant
for

for a carriage to the Grove, it being two miles nearer than Harwood.

To this I would by no means consent; but being entirely disabled from riding, I ordered Robert to make as much haste home as possible, and, without alarming the family, to bring the coach for me. It now occurring to Mr Rivers that the game-keeper's house stood at a little distance, he desired the servant to call there, and order the master of it to bring out a chair for me, without a moment's delay.

In vain did I remonstrate against giving so much trouble. The chair came; and Mr Rivers prevailed on me, in spite of my reluctance, to allow him and honest William to convey me to his cottage. Having ordered his wife to make some proper application to my ankle, which was much swelled, and to persuade me to put on some dry cloaths, he retired into another apartment,

apartment, and left me at leisure to recollect what had passed, and the strange accident which had brought us acquainted with each other.

After having satisfied the curiosity of the good woman with regard to my disaster, and been accommodated with what was necessary, I asked her if she knew the Gentleman who had just left us?—
 ‘ Know him, Madam!’ replied she, ‘ Aye,
 ‘ that I do; and love him too, better
 ‘ than any body in the world, except my
 ‘ husband. Why, for that matter, Ma-
 ‘ dam, if it had not been for young
 ‘ Master, as I always calls him, because
 ‘ I was his wet nurse, both William and
 ‘ I, and all our children, would have been
 ‘ this blessed day without a bit of bread
 ‘ to eat: for young Lord Rivers is quite
 ‘ another sort of man, and wanted to
 ‘ have us all turned out, and his own
 ‘ servant made game-keeper, whose pretty
 ‘ wife,

' wife, they say, is no better than she
 ' should be. Well, Ma'am, as I was a-
 ' going to tell your La'ship, he wanted
 ' his own man made game-keeper, tho'
 ' William has been on the grounds these
 ' twenty years. But when I told the
 ' story to young Master,—Nurse, says he,
 ' whilst I live, you shall never want; and
 ' more than that, says he, I will talk over
 ' the matter with my brother, and you
 ' need not make yourself uneasy, says he.'

Here Nurse was interrupted in her nar-
 rative by the entrance of Mr Rivers,
 whose fine countenance, and elegant form,
 I was now at leisure to observe. Indeed
 they not only drew my attention, but ex-
 cited my admiration; and increased that
 complacency which gratitude for his ten-
 der expressions of concern inspired.

Fortunately it was not necessary to ap-
 prise my mother of the accident; so that
 the coach came without any person in it.

Mr

Mr Rivers begged permission to attend me home; and even during that short space of time, discovered such a fund of good sense, joined with such engaging modesty and affability, that I forgot the pain occasioned by the accident, in the pleasure his conversation afforded me. On our arrival, having assisted in conveying me from the carriage to the parlour, he politely took his leave, requesting permission of my mother to call next morning, and enquire after my health.

Having given her a short account of the accident, we joined in encomiums on the young stranger, whose image from that hour took possession of the heart of your friend.—Ah Maria! how natural, in such a heart, is the transition from gratitude to admiration, and from admiration to love! How natural to admit without suspicion, sentiments which claim to be the genuine offspring of virtue, and which
charm

charm at once and elevate the soul!—But I will dispatch this letter, lest you should again become anxious on account of my health, which is better than might be expected. But, however that may vary, my friendship for you will, I trust, know no change. Adieu! Your

JULIA GREVILLE.

LETTER XXII.

Miss Greville to Miss Herbert.

Harwood.

AS I doubt not that my friend's curiosity is sufficiently excited by my last letter, I will proceed with my narrative without further preamble.—Under the sanction of gratitude to a man who had saved my life at the risk of his own, I fearlessly indulged the first risings of that sweet, but delusive tenderness, which will for ever embitter my future days. O happy men! who, in
bidding

bidding adieu to the object of their ever-changing affections, can shake off that feverish train of hopes and fears, which we, too fond and faithful, carry with us to the grave!

I arose next morning; when, the pain and swelling occasioned by my sprain being both abated, I found myself able to walk with a little assistance. For the first time in my life, I will confess to my friend, I spent near an hour at my toilette, making trial of such pieces of dress as I thought would be most becoming. My complexion was heightened by the glow of expectation; and the confusion into which I was thrown by every little noise, might have sufficiently explained to me the real state of my heart, had I been at pains to enquire.

At last Mr Rivers was announced. He entered the room with a manner so graceful

graceful and dignified, that I felt abashed at his presence; and whilst he was paying his compliments to my father and mother, I could not help contrasting in my mind, the striking difference between his manner, and that of the licentious companions of my father, with whom, however reluctantly, I was often obliged to associate. He, too, tho' in a morning dress, appeared with all the advantages which a fine form receives from adventitious aids. He approached me with a look of mingled respect and solicitude; enquired anxiously about my health; sat down by me, and conversed with ease and vivacity on a variety of topics. Our mutual desire of pleasing, rendered us mutually agreeable. He staid till it was late; and when he took his leave, ' I hope, ' Madam,' said he, ' when you are so ' well as to go abroad again, you will ' permit me to have the honour of escort- ' ing you to some scenes in this neigh-
Vol. I. L ' bourhood,

‘bourhood, highly worthy the attention
 ‘of one, whose just taste leads her to pre-
 ‘fer the simple and sublime originals of
 ‘Nature, to the puerile and insipid imi-
 ‘tations of Art.’ I bowed assent, and he
 bade us adieu.

For some time, he continued to visit
 Harwood every day, under pretence of
 enquiring after my health; and when that
 pretence no longer subsisted, he contrived
 a thousand errands, alike attentive and
 obliging. Some times he brought me
 fruit and flowers, of which he knew I was
 extremely fond; at others, such books as
 he thought would suit my taste. When-
 ever I rode out, he begged permission to
 attend me, and conduct me to a thousand
 beautiful romantic scenes, which were ren-
 dered doubly pleasing, by the exquisite
 pleasure he seemed to derive from the ad-
 miration they excited in me, and the art-
 less praises I bestowed on them. — Ah
 Maria!

Maria! how hallowed by memory is the scene! how endeared to the heart, the object which first awakens our sensibility! Till the moment we love, we scarce perceive that we exist. Days, months, and years, pass away unnoticed. Nature but half unfolds her charms to the careless eye, and but slightly touches the insensible heart: But the first impression of that elegant, tender, delightful passion, seems not only to arouse its dormant powers, but to reanimate all nature with a new soul. We no longer exist for ourselves; our pleasures, our pursuits, our very inquietudes, all refer to the object of our affections; and become exquisite, or otherwise, just in proportion as they are interesting to that beloved object.

This delightful intercourse was soon interrupted by my father, who, like many men of libertine principles and licentious lives, entertained the strictest notions with

respect to the propriety of female conduct. He told me, that as it was evident Lord Cleveland shunned intimacy with him, he had too much pride to consent that his daughter should receive the visits of a man who would be taught to despise her father; and therefore required me, on pain of his displeasure, to avoid every occasion of seeing Mr Rivers. This blow, my dear Maria! was alike cruel and unforeseen. I could not then divine the real motives which influenced my father to impose so arbitrary and unreasonable a command:-- Alas! they became too soon apparent.

The behaviour of Mr Rivers had served daily to confirm my opinion of the superior elegance both of his mind and manners. Wholly ignorant of the world and its maxims, I apprehended no danger from an intercourse such as ours, nor even imagined there could be any impropriety in continuing it. I substituted inclination
in

in the place of prudence; and felt it impossible to condemn as improper, what constituted my whole enjoyment. Tho' nothing particular had yet passed between us, a thousand circumstances, too minute for repetition, had convinced me, that to break off our present intimacy, would be as painful to him as to myself: I knew not on what pretence to do so. Besides, I felt, that though from a sense of duty I might submit to be unhappy myself, to see Rivers unhappy, would be altogether unsupportable.

The perplexity and irresolution into which my father's commands had thrown me, gave me such an air of dejection on my next interview with Mr Rivers, that he immediately perceived it, and tenderly enquired the cause. This increased my embarrassment; and occasioned a restraint between us, that poisoned the delightful freedom with which we used to converse.

At parting, he stopt his horse, and said in a low voice, ‘ I fear to enquire the cause
 ‘ of your uneasiness, which I anxiously
 ‘ wish to share: I greatly fear, that I
 ‘ have done something to offend you;
 ‘ yet, Heaven is my witness! I would die
 ‘ sooner than give you pain.’

The servant was too near to admit of my making any reply, and I suffered him to retire with a simple adieu.

The inquietude I saw him suffer, now redoubled my own. No sorrow pierces so deep, as that which reaches ours, through the bosom of those we love: No anguish is so keen, as that of beholding them suffer on our account.

The next evening, I declined riding, as the only way to avoid meeting Mr Rivers. The following day, he called; but was received so coldly by my father, that
 he

he made but a very short visit.—In the evening, a billet was brought me by his nurse, and fortunately delivered to me without witnesses.

To Miss Greville.

Grove.

‘ Two days ago I was the happiest of
 ‘ mankind, in the conversation and tender
 ‘ friendship of Miss Greville; what I have
 ‘ done to forfeit these blessings, I am en-
 ‘ tirely ignorant. I know you are inca-
 ‘ pable of harbouring unjust resentment;
 ‘ yet it is plain, both from the coldness
 ‘ of your’s and Mr Greville’s manner,
 ‘ that something I am unable to divine
 ‘ has displeased you. I cannot exist in
 ‘ this painful suspense; and as I do not
 ‘ choose to intrude upon you again at
 ‘ Harwood, must earnestly entreat a few
 ‘ lines, to explain a mystery, which over-
 ‘ whelms with concern and inquietude,
 ‘ Your most respectful humble servant,

‘ GEORGE RIVERS.’

I was utterly at a loss what answer to make to this letter. I abhorred every species of art or duplicity; yet found it would be impossible to behave to Mr Rivers in the manner my father required, without either wounding my pride, by a mortifying confession of the real cause of my conduct, or my ingenuity, by assigning a false one. To avoid both of these, I confined my reply to a note, which contained only these few words:—

‘ MR RIVERS can never suppose his
 ‘ friends capable of such injustice, as to
 ‘ be offended with him without a cause;
 ‘ and his own heart will acquit him of
 ‘ any intention to offend. Be assured,
 ‘ Sir, with respect to you, esteem and
 ‘ gratitude are the sentiments which shall
 ‘ always possess your obliged

‘ JULIA GREVILLE.’

Next

Next morning, I was met as usual by Mr Rivers, about a mile from Harwood. The presence of our attendants, prevented the possibility of any particular conversation; but my dejection being still visible, Mr Rivers pressed so earnestly to know the cause, that I was obliged to promise him the satisfaction he required, whenever a convenient opportunity should offer. He eagerly laid hold of this promise; and urged me, in the most earnest manner, to meet him that evening at the bottom of the garden, from whence the house was divided by a thick grove. I felt the utmost reluctance to comply with this proposal, from the clandestine appearance it assumed. But, reflecting that this was the only way I could hope to converse with Mr Rivers, without fear of censure or interruption, and grieved to think of the ungrateful and capricious light in which my conduct must appear to him, I at length agreed to an interview, the imprudence

prudence of which nothing could excuse. I felt all that uneasy irresolution, which accompanies, in an ingenious mind, every doubtful action. I often determined to open my heart to the most affectionate of mothers, and ask her advice with regard to my conduct ; but was withheld by the fear that it might not coincide with my wishes ; or if it did, that it would subject her to the resentment of my father. The evening being arrived, I set out at the appointed hour, with a heavy and anxious heart.—The first step towards error, is ever the most difficult: It is attended with a timidity and consciousness inexpressibly painful, which are soon conquered by habit. Heaven itself seems to place obstacles in our way, to check us in the very beginning of our career of folly ; and oblige us to stop, to reflect, to return. But, headstrong and impetuous, if we scorn these restraints, and persevere in surmounting these obstacles, they insensibly diminish;

nish ; the path of ruin becomes smooth before us, and soon terminates in hopeless destruction.

The train of melancholy reflections which crowd to my mind, obliges me to lay down my pen. I will soon resume it. — Mean time, let me thank my generous friend, for the lively interest she takes in all my concerns ; and assure her, that her's will ever engage the warmest best wishes of her

JULIA GREVILLE.

LETTER XXIII.

Miss Greville to Miss Herbert.

Harwood.

I NEEDED not the assurances conveyed in your last, of your tender anxiety on my account, and your impatience for the rest of my narrative, which I shall now resume.

The

The advice of parents, my dear Maria! ought ever to be held sacred. I certainly did wrong to encourage an intimacy with Mr Rivers, after my father's express prohibition. Had I observed it, I should have escaped many a heart-ach, which my imprudence and disobedience have since occasioned.—Mr Rivers was waiting for me in the little alcove at the extremity of the garden. He flew to meet me, with looks of unaffected joy; and taking my hand, which he pressed to his lips, ‘Permit me, dearest Miss Greville,’ said he, ‘to express some part of the lively
 ‘gratitude I feel for this condescending
 ‘goodness. I really felt life a-burden, under the weight of your displeasure; but
 ‘I flatter myself, if I have offended, I
 ‘read my pardon in these mild forgiving
 ‘eyes.’

I will not pretend to repeat all that
 past at this interesting meeting. Suffice
 it

it to say, that finding it impossible longer to conceal the real cause of my uneasiness, which my father's imprudence already led him to suspect, he spared me the painful relation of my inquietudes, by shewing me that they were already known to him; and by the most insinuating tenderness and sympathy, lessened the bitterness of those sorrows, which he stole insensibly from my heart, while expressing the generous compassion of his own.

A friend to share in my affliction, was a blessing hitherto denied me; forced to conceal my own, for fear of adding to my mother's distress, the relief I felt from communicating that which preyed on my soul, was inexpressible. It seemed to me, as if Heaven, in compassion for my sufferings, and in approbation of my patient submission to them, had sent Rivers, like some messenger of peace, to console and support me. In his good sense, and agree-

able conversation, I found such resources as often led me for a while to forget my distresses : And when they returned with redoubled violence, they only served to impel me to the asylum I found in his tender friendship.

To the lively compassion my distress awakened in the bosom of Rivers, he attributed the still more delightful, more animated tenderness he felt for me ; whilst gratitude on my part, combined with admiration, to secure him the entire possession of my heart, long before I suspected he had made any impression on it. Without enquiring into the nature of those sentiments which possessed our whole souls, we enjoyed that delicious and refined pleasure, which flows from the mingled emotions of love, esteem, and sympathy.

Our ignorance of the real state of our own hearts, preserved us free from apprehension

hension and inquietude ; whilst the secrecy we were obliged to observe, gave a poignant relish to this tender intercourse. It was soon interrupted, however, in a manner that put a period to that, and all my hopes of earthly happiness.

One day having met me as usual on horseback, without any attendant of his own, he begged permission to send my servant a message to —— a town about three miles distant ; and telling him that he would take care to convey Miss Greville to Harwood, desired him to deliver the answer to me on his return. I easily saw this was only a pretence to get rid of the servant ; but I did not disapprove of a conduct, which my wishes might have suggested, but which I never should have had courage to propose, though my heart sickened for an opportunity of unburdening its griefs to my kind sympathizing friend.

Several late excesses of my father, had so greatly involved his affairs, and ruined his temper, that our domestic comfort was utterly destroyed. My spirits that day were unusually depressed; and I felt so weak and languid, from distress of mind, and want of rest, that I could hardly sit upright. Mr Rivers perceived my extreme lassitude; and upon reaching the path that struck into the wood where we had first met, entreated me to dismount, and suffer him to lead our horses till we should reach the side of the river; where the freshness of the air would revive me, and where I might rest a while, till I should feel myself somewhat recruited. I did so, and having tied our horses to a tree, we sat down on the very spot, where his humanity rescued me from the fate which threatened to overwhelm me.

My excessive dejection awakened in his bosom the most affecting sympathy. Com-
passion

passion is ever soothing ; but in a state of mind so depressing and hopeless as I then experienced, it becomes peculiarly refreshing and delightful to the soul. The tenderness of his expressions, dissolved mine in a sweet and mournful gratitude. I silently contrasted the gentleness of his manner, with the harshness with which I was usually treated by him, whom Nature designed my friend and protector, as well as parent.

My tears flowed, in spite of every effort to restrain them ; and the exertions I made for that purpose, only added force to the sighs which burst from my afflicted bosom.

Mr Rivers beheld me with emotions almost too painful to be supported. He respectfully took my hand, which he pressed to his breast ; he soothed, he remonstrated, he consoled me. ‘ Dearest Miss Greville,’ said he, ‘ restrain, I conjure you, this excessive sorrow, which will destroy your

‘ tender frame, unless you would make
 ‘ him completely miserable, who could die
 ‘ to make you happy.—Ah! why, why,’
 continued he passionately, ‘ was I permit-
 ‘ ed by Heaven, to save a life a thousand
 ‘ times more dear, more valuable than
 ‘ my own, unless permitted also, by de-
 ‘ voting every future hour of mine, to her
 ‘ whose affection can alone endear it?’—
 Here he paused as if afraid to proceed.—
 ‘ Indeed,’ interrupted I, ‘ I could almost
 ‘ regret that humanity, which prolonged
 ‘ my life, only to prolong my wretched-
 ‘ ness.’—‘ Oh say not so!’ replied he; ‘ is
 ‘ it possible you can thus repay the most
 ‘ tender friendship, the most ardent passion
 ‘ that ever warmed a human breast?—
 ‘ Pardon this confession, loveliest of wo-
 ‘ men!—the place, the circumstances have
 ‘ forced it from me. Let it not offend
 ‘ my Julia,’ continued he, raising his fine
 eyes to my face, which was covered with
 blushes, ‘ if the friend she has honoured
 ‘ with

‘ with her esteem and confidence, aspire
 ‘ to share in the tenderest affections of the
 ‘ dearest, gentlest, best of hearts !’

My silence and confusion left no room for Mr Rivers to doubt of the reception this declaration met with. Not contented, however, with a silent assent, he contrived to draw from me, before we parted, a confession of that mutual tenderness which had long possessed my heart. As several country people passed by, he had prevailed on me, during our interesting conversation, to cross the river, and retire into the Hermitage, to avoid the possibility of being observed ; and at the very moment when transported with my hesitating and half-pronounced confession, he seized my hand, which he eagerly kissed, a favourite dog of Lord Cleveland’s came running through the wood, and the next moment the Earl himself appeared in view. He stopt, on seeing us. Shame and surprise, added

added to the perturbation of my mind during our whole conversation, so entirely overcame my weak spirits, that I remained for some moments like one stupefied. Lord Cleveland approached, and kindly assisted his son in recovering me. When my recollection returned, I felt my confusion increased by the earnestness and astonishment with which he seemed to survey me; but utterly unable to frame any excuse for my present situation, and abhorring the meanness of an attempt to dissemble, I remained silent, confounded, and abashed.

Mr Rivers having informed his father of my name, the Earl politely, though coldly, made offer of his coach to convey me home. I thanked him; but added, I believed I should now be able to mount my own horse, which waited for me. He retired, and left me to the care of his son.

How

How shall I attempt to express to my friend, the violent and distracting passions that now overwhelmed me? Not all the tender eloquence of Rivers could sooth or alleviate them.—In judging of our own actions, we seldom consider the light in which they will appear to those who are ignorant of the motives that gave them birth, and circumstances that determine their nature. Partiality and self-love suggest a thousand excuses for those we reckon doubtful, and which the world, viewing with the cool eye of reason, hesitates not to pronounce culpable. To be seen by Lord Cleveland in this sequestered spot, without any attendant or companion but his son, whose manner, at the moment he discovered us, too plainly betrayed the nature of those sentiments which it was impossible now to attempt concealing; and of which we dared not to hope his approbation;—our mutual silence and confusion,—my father's licentious principles,

and

and ruined fortune,—the company with whom I was accustomed to converse,—all, all must convince Lord Cleveland, that I was an artful designing girl, who was scheming to draw his son into a clandestine and ruinous connection.

Such were the mortifying ideas that took possession of my mind: the more painful and insupportable, because of that very ingenuity of which I was probably believed incapable, at the very time I was secretly resolving, that the rectitude of my future conduct should justify to the world, the preference with which Rivers had honoured me. I hesitated not about communicating my apprehensions to him. He strove to make me easy, by assuring me, that there was nothing so very particular in the circumstance of our being seen together at the Hermitage, as our own consciousness made us believe. ‘If, however,’ continued he, ‘my father should suspect
‘ the

‘ the nature of our attachment, I will
 ‘ make no hesitation to avow mine; and
 ‘ endeavour to procure his approbation of
 ‘ those sentiments, which not even his
 ‘ displeasure shall tempt me to renounce.’

The depression of my spirits was too great, to admit of continuing this affecting conversation. I proposed returning home; and just as we left the wood, we observed his nurse crossing the road with her milking-pail, who seeing me look faint and exhausted, begged me to step in, and take a little refreshment; at that instant a heavy shower of rain falling, I had no choice left. Mr Rivers joined his entreaties to her's. I consented; but was not a little disconcerted by the innocent simplicity of my kind hostess.

After reminding me of the accident which first brought me to her cottage, she added, ‘ I warrant your La'ship and young
 ‘ Master

‘ Master are better acquainted now? But,
 ‘ lack-a-day! you look so pale and for-
 ‘ rowful, one would think you had fallen
 ‘ into the river again. Heaven bless you
 ‘ both! You are both so good, and so
 ‘ handsome, that I doubt not I shall see
 ‘ a wedding at the Grove before it be
 ‘ long.’

Mr Rivers, who saw my confusion, en-
 deavoured to relieve it, by asking nurse
 after his little god-son. The child was
 brought, and, with much good nature,
 Mr Rivers re-echoed the praises bestowed
 on it by its happy mother. After thank-
 ing her for her kind hospitality, the rain
 ceasing, we bade her adieu, and prepared
 to return home.

The servant rejoining us at a small di-
 stance from Harwood, we parted; Mr
 Rivers promising to meet me in the even-
 ing,

ing, and inform me of what should pass between him and the Earl.

Never had I before experienced such a restless and disturbed state of mind. Doubtful of the propriety of the part I had acted, and more irresolute than ever with respect to that I ought to pursue, my thoughts were all confusion. When the path of duty is clearly marked out, we can exert all our resolution, and follow it with whatever difficulties it may be attended : But when uncertain which way to turn, the suspense in which reason is held, becomes altogether distracting.

Though disposed to listen to the dictates of inclination, in continuing my intimacy with Mr Rivers, I resolved never to violate those of honour, by entering into any engagement with him, without the sanction of those who have a right to direct us in the most important action of our lives.

My parents had gone to pay a visit during my absence, and not returning till late, I was left at liberty to indulge, without interruption, that train of gloomy reflections, to which, as by some secret presentiment of my approaching misfortunes, my mind now gave unbounded scope.

The evening arrived ; we met : but how great was my surprise to learn, that though Lord Cleveland had dined at home, and there was no company present, he had taken no notice to his son of what had passed in the morning !

With the ardour natural to youth, and the hope allied to love, we ventured to draw the most flattering presages from this silence ; and, because the obstacles to our wishes were a while obscured by our passion, rashly concluded that they no longer existed.

The

The two following days, we were prevented from meeting, by the arrival of company at the Grove; and on the evening of the third, being told that a country woman desired to speak with me, I stepped down stairs, where I found nurse, who delivered me the following billet, and presently retired.

‘ Come to me this moment, my beloved
 ‘ Julia! I wait for you at the Alcove.’

I entered the garden with trembling steps: I saw Rivers; but Gracious Heaven! how changed! Instead of flying to meet me, he stood still at my approach; a paleness like that of death, overspread his countenance, and his eyes were rivetted to the ground. After a few moments of mournful and distracting silence, he grasped my hand. ‘ O Julia! loveliest, ‘ best of women!’ said he, ‘ why cannot ‘ I be unhappy alone? why must my hard
 N 2 ‘ destiny

‘ destiny involve in my affliction, that
 ‘ heart whose peace is dearer, far dearer
 ‘ than my own? Why did my rash tongue
 ‘ betray that ardent, that enthusiastic pas-
 ‘ sion, which prudence, generosity, nay
 ‘ love itself, should have induced me to
 ‘ confine within my own bosom? Oh
 ‘ Heaven!’ continued he, fixing his mourn-
 ful eyes on me, with a look which pierced
 my soul, which I shall never, never forget,
 ‘ I have ruined the peace of her I love!’

I was so greatly affected with this path-
 etic discourse, that I had not courage for
 some time to demand an explanation of it.
 At length I recovered composure enough
 to beg he would relieve me from a suspense
 a thousand times more intolerable than the
 most fatal intelligence.

Unable to speak, he took a letter from
 his pocket, which he desired me to read ;
 it

it was from his father, and contained these words :

‘ *My dear George,*

‘ I know you are incapable of a base or dishonourable action ; yet the situation in which I found you and Miss Greville yesterday, leaves me no room to doubt that you are misled yourself, and are endeavouring to mislead the object of your heart’s best affection, by giving way to a passion which would involve you both in ruin.

‘ The uncommon beauty, and amiable dispositions of Miss Greville, sufficiently justify your preference. But nothing in your situation could excuse so dishonourable a conduct, as that of engaging the affections of an excellent young woman, without the least probability of being able to offer her your hand ; whilst by the discovery of your sentiments, you

‘ were binding her by gratitude, (the
 ‘ strongest of all ties to an ingenuous
 ‘ mind), to reject every opportunity of
 ‘ establishing herself in the world ; a cir-
 ‘ cumstance which her father’s misconduct
 ‘ will render highly necessary.

‘ Hitherto, my dear George, I do not
 ‘ blame you ; but let my past indulgence
 ‘ secure your unreluctant obedience to my
 ‘ commands. You know my estate is
 ‘ strictly entailed on your brother. Justice
 ‘ demands that I should make all the pro-
 ‘ vision I can for your sisters, consistently
 ‘ with my rank in life, which involves me
 ‘ in much expence. And though at my
 ‘ death you will inherit your mother’s
 ‘ fortune, I know you too well to believe
 ‘ that you would wish to purchase a much
 ‘ larger one, at such a price.

‘ On yourself, therefore, must be your
 ‘ future dependence ; and your choice of
 ‘ the

‘ the army seems to have been peculiarly
 ‘ fortunate, as my old friend Lord M——
 ‘ is just setting off to join his regiment, in
 ‘ order to embark for America. He has
 ‘ presented you with a commission, and
 ‘ generously promised to use his whole in-
 ‘ terest in your behalf.

‘ As the troops embark next week, it
 ‘ will be necessary for you to set out to-
 ‘ morrow morning with his Lordship, in
 ‘ order to have yourself properly equipt at
 ‘ London.

‘ Your chearful compliance with this
 ‘ plan, will give pleasure to your affection-
 ‘ ate father,

‘ CLEVELAND.’

You, Maria ! will better imagine than I
 can describe, the feelings occasioned by
 this letter. We gave way to the violence
 of our emotions, without restraint. Hav-
 ing

ing indulged them till we were both ashamed, I rose; and with all the fortitude and composure I could command, ‘ Rivers!’ said I, ‘ the surest way to happiness, is to ‘ deserve being happy. Go,’ continued I, ‘ go and obey the dictates of honour ‘ and duty. Secure in my esteem—my ‘ unalterable affection,—let us hope that ‘ a time may yet arrive, when Heaven ‘ will reward our present sacrifice, and ‘ bless me with power to make you truly ‘ blest.’

He gazed on me for some moments with delight and astonishment; and clasping me to his bosom, ‘ Most noble, most ‘ angelic of women!’ cried he, ‘ may ‘ Heaven no longer preserve my life, than ‘ whilst it is sustained by that dear de- ‘ lightful hope!’

As the evening was far spent, we were forced to part. After mutual vows of inviolable

violable fidelity, and mutual promises of constant correspondence, Rivers taking a sprig of laurel from a neighbouring tree, placed it on the ground, at the spot where you saw it growing. Julia!’ said he, ‘let
 ‘ this remind you of your absent Rivers.
 ‘ Cherish it with care, my gentlest Love!
 ‘ it shall either crown him with honour,
 ‘ or be scattered on his grave.’

This solemn sentence uttered, he fixed his eyes on me, with a look of unutterable tenderness; then clasping his hands, and raising them to Heaven, ‘ Powerful Protector of virtue and innocence!’ cried he, ‘ preserve this thy choicest blessing from
 ‘ danger!—Restore us to happiness and
 ‘ each other, or let us meet no more!’

Again he gazed on me with fond affection: again supplicated Heaven to bless me: again pressed me to his throbbing bosom; and at length, with a faltering voice,

voice, pronounced the last, lingering, cruel
FAREWELL!

He left the Grove next morning, but wrote to me by every opportunity. So far from abating the ardour of his affection during the first year of his absence, time seemed to encrease both his love and his hope: His letters were my sole support under the burden of my domestic inquietudes, which were aggravated by the addresses of Mr Melvill, a cousin of my own, and a man of considerable fortune. Upon my positively rejecting this match, my father treated me with redoubled severity, and threw out some suspicions with regard to my attachment to Rivers, that greatly alarmed me. But as he did not question me on the subject, I was happily relieved from the cruel necessity of practising that dissimulation, which was utterly repugnant to my nature; and which the best of mothers had early taught me to shun, as the
first

first fatal step that leads directly from error to vice.

The noble ingenuity, and sensibility of heart, by which Mr Rivers was distinguished, induced me to lay open mine to him, without reserve. His letters, of which I shall inclose a few, displayed at once the elegance of his mind, and the ardour of his affection. But, ah, Maria! to whom ought we to confide our peace, on whom depend for happiness, in a world full of deceit and ingratitude; and where nothing is certain, but perpetual vicissitude?

Two years, two lingering joyless years have elapsed, without bringing me a single letter; notwithstanding my having repeatedly written, requesting, in the most earnest manner, to know the cause of this killing neglect. Alas, Maria! there can be none, except that levity and inconstancy inherent in his sex, of which we
are

are assured, from our earliest infancy ; but which we reject, like other unpleasing truths, till we are forced to assent to them by painful experience.

I have learned, by different accidents, that Lord Cleveland receives letters from his son by every opportunity ; that he is universally beloved ; and, on account of his gallant behaviour at the siege of Charlestown, has been advanced to the rank of Colonel.

In vain has my fond heart framed a thousand excuses for his negligence : that heart can no longer deceive me. The veil is withdrawn, with which passion too long hoodwinked my reason. I see—I feel—his indifference,—his contempt !—Ah ! would to Heaven I could return it ! Unjust Rivers ! what have I done to deserve it ? Is it possible thou canst hate me, for loving thee ; despise me, for confiding in thee ;
betray

betray me, for believing thee?—Help me, Maria! help me to subdue this rebellious heart. Bring my pride—my reason—my injured love to my aid; and if they cannot restore my lost happiness, O teach them to restore my peace! Peace is all my soul aspires after, in this transitory, changeable, unsatisfying world. Alas! I fear, I greatly fear, it will for ever be a stranger to the wounded bosom of your affectionate, but much afflicted friend,

JULIA GREVILLE.

Letters inclosed in the preceding.

LETTER I.

Mr Rivers to Miss Greville.

I HAVE been absent from you only three days; yet, ah Julia! after so constant, so delightful an intercourse, how tedious, how joyless have they proved! You have

Vol. I.

O

never

never been absent from my thoughts. I meet you in every moment of retirement: I fancy I see you strolling down the honey-suckle walk, to wait for me at the accustomed hour in the Alcove. When the clock strikes seven, my heart sickens with recollection of the delightful past. I retire to my apartment---take out your picture---contemplate it with melancholy pleasure---teach it to speak the language of my wishes---whilst my heart replies to it with grateful glowing affection. Nor is this ideal intercourse barren either of delight or improvement. It is impossible to think of your attachment, without gratitude to Heaven; or of your amiable virtues, without wishing to resemble you.

What can I say to you, on the most painful, the most delicate of all subjects? Nothing is so distressing to me, as the reflection that you are denied the presence of a friend, to support you under the cruel sufferings

sufferings inflicted by him whom Nature intended your earliest and surest friend.--- Most loved of the human race! let not your heart sink under the severe mortification occasioned by this circumstance. Though others prove unjust to your merit, and indifferent to your happiness, think, O think of the esteem, the love, the admiration of him, to whom yours is, and ever will be, dearer than the utmost energy of language can express; and whose existence, as well as happiness, is wrapped up in yours!—Cherish, for both our sakes, I conjure you, those presentiments which mitigate the severity of separation. Ah Julia! why should we ever be separated?

I stepped into a cottage this morning, to shun a violent shower; there I found two decent looking peasants seated at their homely meal, and surrounded by eight smiling countenances, in which pleasure, peace, and plenty, were written in legible

O 2

characters.

characters. At sight of this happy group, I could not help sighing to myself. ‘ Why should I leave my Julia, when so little can satisfy the necessities of human beings ?’ The God of nature, with liberal hand, supplies the wants of all his creatures : Shall we spurn his proffered bounty, and lose the precious transient season of youth, in the pursuit of that which only serves, with the generality of our species, to create imaginary wants, not supply those that are real ?

How can I be otherwise than happy, when you assure me that you live by the hope of making me so ? How can I be careless of a life, which you tell me gives all its value to yours ?—Julia ! most generous, most amiable of women ! how can I ever be capable of wounding a heart thus tenderly endeared ?

Supported

Supported by mutual assurances of each other's attachment, let us often anticipate that blissful day, when patience shall be rewarded with transport, and peace exalted to happiness. My absent, yet ever present Love, adieu! Continue to repeat to me the delightful assurance, that you love me sincerely—that you will love me always. It is the most invaluable of all truths to your faithful, grateful, and admiring

GEORGE RIVERS.

LETTER II.

THE slight fever which prevented me from writing last post, was occasioned by the violence of my efforts, to conceal from you that anguish which almost overcame my resolution, at the cruel moment of our separation.—Julia! you are my superior in every thing; even in that fortitude which our sex arrogantly claim as their own.

Denied the pleasure of beholding you, your letters were my whole comfort. While I eagerly perused every delightful sentence, they insensibly transferred the throbbing of my head to my heart. There, it was pain—here, it is transport!—Dearest Julia! what can I not endure with resolution, while supported by the assurance of your tender affection?

I am now free from every complaint, except such as are necessarily occasioned by your absence. Such may be quieted, but cannot be eradicated.—Yet, should you tire of hearing them, to effect my cure, you have only to say,—‘I love you no longer.’

‘I love you no longer;’—Heavens! my Julia! how I shudder at the bare idea of such misery! Let me flee from it, as from the worst of evils.

• Love

Love has been said to give courage to the fearful; I have not found it so. When I reflect on the number of miles that now divide us, fear assumes every shape of danger to torment me. Oh Julia! my heart dies within me, when I think what ravages, time, absence, sickness, and death, make in human affairs. Against the influence of the two former, I trust we are both proof; but, what human skill can defend us from the assaults of the latter?

And is this the office of Reason, to deprive us of present comfort, and substitute in its place, vain and criminal apprehension? Surely no. Rather let me believe that I listen to her dictates, when something whispers me—yet a year, or two years more, and the same cares shall occupy, the same pleasures delight, the same roof protect two Lovers, who will know no care, no pleasure, but that of making each other happy.

But

But believe me, tho' love has softened, it has not enervated my mind. On the contrary, I pursue every plan likely to promote my future advancement, with unaccustomed alacrity. It were strange indeed if my activity could sleep, while a future independence, in which you are to share, is my object; or if my ambition could remain unmoved with the hope of that fame, which might one day soothe the ear of my Love!

In continuation.

I was interrupted whilst writing to you, by the only person on earth I could forgive for such an intrusion. My surprise indeed could only be equalled by my pleasure, when my door opened, and Harry Stanley flew to embrace me. At the time I left England, his regiment was ordered for the East Indies, and I had not learned the change made in its destination, which will be productive of so much satisfaction to me.

We

We have been long and intimately acquainted. His character is that of a man of sense, honour, and spirit ; but the most conspicuous of all his good qualities, is that humanity which is ever connected with true courage, and adds peculiar lustre to the profession of arms.

In his breast I can confide every thought of mine. He is well qualified to share in all my anxieties, by an attachment to a young Lady, of whose sentiments he is still ignorant, and from whom, want of fortune has necessarily separated him. You may believe the society of such a friend must be an invaluable acquisition, at a time when I am forced to forego the charms of your conversation.

This morning your letter reached me—the first of your's that ever gave me pain! The moment I broke the seal, my eye caught the dreaded name of Melvill; my
blood

blood grew chill, and my heart throbbed with apprehension. On your fidelity, my only Love! my reliance is unshaken, as my trust in Heaven! But you know not—Oh Julia! you can never know—the thousand pangs connected with the name of Rival! What will not love, merit, and perseverance effect!—But begone, tormenting unworthy fears! ye have Melvill only for your object:—Do not my hopes rest on Julia Greville?

Your letters are my only comforters: You know not how efficacious is the balm they bestow. I fear to tell you how welcome, how inestimable they are to me, lest you should be tempted to sacrifice your duty to my indulgence. Heaven knows, I wish it not to come in competition with the comfort of your amiable afflicted mother, whose whole consolation flows from your tenderness: I never wish to see the ties of love weaken those of kindred
or

or friendship, in that gentle bosom where every virtue resides.

I am dissatisfied with myself, for having allowed ten days to elapse without writing to you. It was not like the friend, the lover whom your fancy has pictured all kindness and unceasing attention to your happiness; and who ought to have broke through all the obstacles fatigue and duty threw in his way, rather than disappoint one expectation of that heart, which he knows by his own, cherishes them with a fondness that cannot be described.

But let me not wound the bosom of my Love, by thus accusing myself. Rather let me lose the remembrance of my fault, in that heavenly complacency I feel in the consciousness of being able to give her pleasure.

Your

Your love, my Julia! not only makes all my happiness; but, by giving me dignity in my own eyes, will defend me from every mean, every culpable action.—O it will do infinitely more! it will teach me to deserve you; it will raise me to honour, by inspiring me with virtue.

Can we doubt, my amiable friend, that one great purpose of the God of nature, in transfusing through the human breast such tenderness as we cherish for each other, is to increase our detestation of what is base and unworthy, and to animate our pursuit of what is laudable and excellent?

As in the presence of a beloved friend, to whom we unbosom ourselves without reserve, secure that none of our affairs are uninteresting to him, the day insensibly passes away, and we behold the approach of evening with equal surprise and regret;—
so,

so, in conversing by my pen, with the most beloved of all friends, I forget the number of lines I have written, till as now my paper warns me to say adieu. Julia! in a few weeks, your dear hand will unfold this letter, your eyes trace the lines I am now writing, and your faithful heart sympathize in the tender emotions of mine.— Oh! could I too hope in so short a space to behold thee, loveliest, best of women! how would that prospect dissipate in a moment, the gloom which now takes possession of my mind!

Let me conclude with a sentence from Terence, which I have just been reading. It breathes the language of Nature, the language of my heart, to which I trust every feeling of your's is responsive.

‘ Continue to love me, by day and by
 ‘ night. Think of me, dream of me,
 ‘ wish for me, expect me, delight in me,

‘be wholly with me; in short, be my very
 ‘foul, as I am your’s!’

LETTER III.

IMMEDIATELY after dispatching my last, I was obliged to attend a public meeting with some brother officers.

There I received your thrice welcome letter; but afraid that my agitation might betray me, I dared not trust myself to read it in their presence. Their conversation, at no time very interesting, became intolerably irksome. I found a pretence to retire; and now shut up in my apartment, secure from every interruption, my whole soul dissolves in tenderness at the melting expressions of your’s. Julia! light and joy of my life! whose peace to me is happiness! why should I vainly attempt describing to you, what I felt, while assured by you that my letter had dispelled the
 gloomy

gloomy apprehensions with which you were overwhelmed on my account, and had restored peace and comfort to your dear bosom? Search there, my Love! Recollect the delight with which the happiness of your Rivers has expanded it, and you will find the only image that can justly express the feelings of mine.

How affecting is the concern you express for my safety, and how unworthy were I of your solicitude, were I not grateful for that affection from which it originates, and attentive even to your slightest wish!

You reproach me with being rash, and exposing myself to unnecessary danger. Be assured this is not the case. The same honour that leads me to embrace every occasion of justifying your partiality, by discharging my duty, commands me to guard a life which derives its value from

your affection, and its happiness from the hope of one day contributing to your's. Julia! can this transporting hope fail to animate me with the desire of rising by merit to distinction?

Banish, I conjure you, all unnecessary fears for my safety, and oh be greatly careful of your own! Think it is the whole happiness—the life of your Rivers, that he himself entreats you to preserve.

What strange transformations does love produce! Wealth, so long despised, is now become the object of my constant pursuit. And why should it not be so? Wealth, when employed in administering to the comfort of the indigent, and encouragement of the industrious, may be desired without avarice, and enjoyed with innocence. But should Heaven deny us the power which affluence supplies, we will feel, that a sincere wish to do good, accompanied with a prudent œconomy,

œconomy, will enable us to be liberal and beneficent, even with a contracted fortune.

In one wish may I be indulged, which rises spontaneously, which glows ardently, which will not be repressed; that of soon, very soon, being restored to my friends, my country—and, oh! far dearer than all, to my tenderly beloved Julia!

LETTER IV.

It is midnight;---silence and sleep reign around me. The intrusive cares of the day no longer force my mind from the dear object of its fondest hopes, nor interrupt an ideal intercourse, which now, alas! forms all my enjoyment. Still, still I see, I listen to my Julia;—still gaze on the mild lustre of her eyes; their gentle beams still penetrate my inmost soul, and convey to my heart those expressions of tenderness which no eloquence can describe. But,

alas! this sweet illusion is of short duration. Imagination soon yields to the dominion of sense, and leaves me with anguish to perceive, that I am alone, and far distant from her in whose society I look for all the happiness I hope to enjoy in this world; and without whose participation, I can scarce form an idea of felicity in the next.

Nor is it only in the hours of solitude that Fancy presents me with the image of my Love. You are not only my earliest and my latest thought, but you accompany me through every period of the day; and every incident that occurs, insensibly leads me to think of you.

If I am exhausted with toil, I consider it as a slight tribute that must be paid for the happiness to which all my hopes are pointed. If I am in company with women uncommonly amiable and accomplished, I
exult

exult in the superiority of my Julia. If at any time I am treated with attention and respect, I regret that she is not present, to enjoy my importance. If I perceive any marks of neglect in those I converse with, I think of her inestimable affection, and from the height to which that has raised me, I look down on them, not with indignation, but contempt. I see---I hear---I enjoy but for you. Whatever is endearing in society, sacred in retirement, improving in science, ennobling in virtue, all, all I strive to treasure up, in the hope of one day rendering myself more worthy of the best of Heaven's blessings, your gentle, your faithful heart.

Mine bleeds for the sorrows that prey on the peace of its dearest partner. Rely on all the relief which sympathy and boundless affection can supply; and look forward to that period, when you shall forget the harsh unkindness of a father,
in

in the tenderness of a grateful affectionate husband.

The ship which is to convey this, is already under sail : joy sits smiling on every countenance. How I envy their lot, who are permitted to revisit those they love!

Oh, Julia! how long shall my heart sicken with that expectation! How long shall it be, ere you shall be restored to the fondest of all lovers---the faithfulest of all friends!

GEORGE RIVERS.

LETTER V.

AT length, most beloved of my soul! the object so anxiously, so ardently desired, appears in view ; and Heaven, that witnesses the sincerity of my affection, gives me the near prospect of that independence, which,

which, by sharing with you, cannot fail to confer happiness on your Rivers.

Judge with what transport I received this morning, from the hands of Lord M----, a Colonel's commission, which he generously termed the reward of valour; but which I could hardly have deserved, for endeavouring to discharge my duty.

O Julia! on this occasion, how sensibly do I feel the disinterestedness of that ennobling sentiment which possesses my whole soul! It is for you—for you alone, I aspire to distinction, and covet independence; nor would I wish to obtain either, but by means of that merit which might justify your preference, and my aspiring hopes.

Already a thousand smiling images---
a thousand scenes of happiness and joy
present themselves to my glowing imagination.

ation. Already, the seas that divide us, are passed. Already, I am in England. I behold my Julia, and read in her intelligent eyes, that her heart sympathizes in every delightful emotion I experience.

Dearest object of my highest, most confirmed esteem, as well as of my whole fond affection ! what pleasure can fame, wealth, honour confer, compared with that which every approving word of your's infuses into my grateful heart ?

To-morrow, the last month of that winter commences, which appeared so formidable in prospect. Thus, imperceptibly, shall the several portions of time pass away, that must still divide me from my Love ; whilst every restless wish, and sickly hope, and anxious care, shall serve, by contrast, to heighten the transport of mutual love, and boundless confidence.

It

It is thus I strive to soothe those apprehensions, which, in spite of me, are for ever springing up in my heart. Oh Julia! pity its divided feelings, and try to render them more submissive to reason, more consistent with each other. By your example, teach me fortitude, and banish my anxieties by your tenderness.

You say, 'Let me live in your memory.' My admired mistress! my chosen friend! you live in my heart—you will ever live there.

Should Heaven unite our fates as closely as our affections, ten thousand proofs will convince you, that you are the dearest of all human beings to your faithful and devoted

GEORGE RIVERS.

LET.

LETTER XXIV.

Miss Herbert to Miss Greville.

London.

COULD my Julia behold the tears with which her last letter is bedewed, she would then judge of the tenderness of that sympathy, which her misfortunes have awakened in the bosom of her friend.

O why is pity all we have to bestow on affliction,—why is it so unavailing towards the relief of those we love?

At this moment my heart overflows with grief and compassion; yet I am unable to suggest one word of comfort to you. I am bewildered in a variety of conjectures, and know not what to think. I fear to flatter you with hopes, the disappointment of which may prove destructive of that peace you so ardently wish to regain; and
tremble

tremble alike at the idea of being unjust to Rivers, and unkind to you.

Ah Julia! is it then possible that two short years should produce so astonishing a change, in the sentiments of a heart so uncorrupted? Is it possible, at so early an age, that the human character can be enveloped with such deep disguises? Or could the tender, passionate, generous Rivers, in one moment, forget all ties human and divine, renounce his vows, forfeit his honour, madly forego his own happiness, and cruelly destroy the peace of her, whose whole enjoyment was derived from his affection? On the other hand, to write regularly to his father, yet for two years to omit answering your letters; to be successful in the army, yet spurn that felicity to which all his hopes seemed directed; to pity, and yet grieve you; to love, and yet injure you; to admire, esteem, adore, and yet forget you? —————

Julia! there is no room for doubt. Rivers is unworthy of the treasure he too long possessed. Would to Heaven I could frame one excuse for a conduct so inconsistent, or save you the anguish of condemning him you loved! But my perfect knowledge of your worth, so greatly aggravates his offences, that I find this impracticable. What then remains, my beloved friend, but to abandon him to the consequences of his own folly and ingratitude; and quit for ever a subject, from which my Julia can derive nothing but sorrow; a sorrow which may sometimes be banished, by sharing in the satisfactions of others; but which can neither be alleviated by reflection, nor soothed by hope?

How various are the pangs that pierce the human heart! how necessary the conviction that a future state of perfection and felicity awaits us, when all the seeming disorders of this shall be rectified!

Were

Were our trials here to arise solely from our own errors or vices, one should imagine that we might submit with patience to the penalties we have voluntarily incurred. But when our keenest sufferings proceed from the indulgence of our most virtuous affections, what can sustain us in the dreadful conflict, but the steadfast conviction, that these, by constituting our necessary discipline, will issue in our everlasting happiness?

May the calm satisfaction of conscious rectitude, support you under all the calamities of this life; and may you, frequently enabled to look beyond it, anticipate that glorious reward which awaits you in a better.—I am, with ever-increasing esteem,

Your affectionate friend,

MARIA HERBERT.

LETTER XXV.

Miss Greville to Miss Herbert.

Harwood.

THERE is no situation, my beloved Maria, in which the human heart does not derive relief from sympathy. Your's is soothing to mine; yet I fear I am not sufficiently grateful, sufficiently sensible of the value of your inestimable friendship. Ah my friend! could the conviction of the understanding silence the murmurs of the heart, my days would not be clouded with sorrow, nor my reflections embittered by vain, perhaps criminal regrets. I should then consider as a blessing, what I have hitherto regarded as the heaviest calamity; and see the secret hand of Providence rescuing me from misery, and restoring me to safety, by the disappointment of my fondest, but presumptuous wishes.

Alas

Alas Maria ! why cannot I feel, as well as reason aright ? why should I cherish regret in that bosom where hope no longer resides ? why should I fondly dwell on the remembrance of happiness, which shall no more return ; or continue to think with tenderness, of a man who has cruelly abandoned me—who will never, never think of me more ? Yes, my kindest friend, my wisest counsellor, yes, I will follow your advice ; I will ‘ abandon him to the consequences of his own ingratitude ; and ‘ quit for ever a subject, from which I ‘ can indeed derive nothing but sorrow.’

Last night I visited your favourite Grove. Desolate, solitary ; its feathered inhabitants all banished by the tempest which howled round my head, and strewed my path with leaves ; the melancholy scene had still charms for me ; it accorded with the tone of my mind, and favoured the train of my solemn reflections.

But a few weeks are past, since your feet had troden the same path, your eyes beheld the same objects, and your heart melted with the same delightful tenderness, with which I then thought of my absent friend.

How soothing, Maria, is that secret, silent intercourse, to which an attachment like our's gives birth !

Often have you seen the clouds of care and sorrow disperse from the brow of your Julia, as you listened to the recital of her peculiar griefs, and in sighs expressed that pity which was all the painful subject could admit of. Often has your presence diffused a gleam of sunshine through her soul, and banished a while those vexing inquietudes that preyed upon her heart. You have seen this ; and oh ! how sweet must the conviction have proved, that you was pouring balm into my wounded bosom !

Those

Those blissful moments are past; but assuredly they shall return. Yes, Maria, they shall return, and I shall yet taste the reward of doing my duty, in the approbation of her who will never regard my actions through any other medium, than that which truth and tenderness supply.

My mother came this moment into my apartment, and folding me in her arms, gave vent to the oppressive sorrows of her heart. ‘ Julia,’ said she, ‘ you must support me; you are indeed my only earthly comfort. I tenderly love, I revere my child, for that patient submission with which you bow under the rod of your Heavenly Father, who sustains whilst he chastens, and will never suffer us to sink under the weight of necessary correction.’

‘ O, my child, that I could imitate you, who ought to have set you an example!

‘ But,

‘ But, harrassed for so many years with con-
 ‘ stant distress, and worn out with repeat-
 ‘ ed unkindness, my resolution fails; my
 ‘ constitution is broken under the weight
 ‘ of my misfortunes, and my hope of
 ‘ better days has been so long delayed,
 ‘ that my heart is sick—yes, Julia! sick
 ‘ to death.’

Maria! think what I felt on hearing
 these words from the lips of a mother.
 Yes, by the aid of Heaven, I will comfort,
 I will sustain, I will never, never grieve her!
 The thought of living to support my re-
 vered parent, inspires new strength into
 my dejected soul. If I can no longer hope
 for happiness myself, I thank God I may
 yet contribute to the relief, the happiness
 of others. It is thus that the Almighty
 infuses into the bitter cup of adversity,
 those salutary ingredients that prove it to
 be the gift of a Father, not imposed in
 wrath, but proffered in mercy.

Continue

Continue to support my resolutions by your approbation. Write often, and think nothing in which you are concerned, either unimportant, or uninteresting, to

Your faithful friend,

JULIA GREVILLE.

LETTER XXVI.

Miss Herbert to Miss Greville.

London.

My dearest Julia! we all experience, that the human mind is so constituted, that in spite of extreme inward sorrow, outward objects necessarily engage our attention; and if they are new, for a while at least dissipate our thoughts.

In the hope of diverting your's from the painful subjects on which they are too prone to dwell, I shall give you an account of my last week's rambles.

Having

Having received a pressing invitation from Mr ———, to accompany him to his seat at Richmond, my father, from motives of prudence, accepted, though with no small reluctance; and last Monday, carried my sister and me, to partake in the elegant pleasures of a table groaning under the weight of victuals, which made their appearance like his Majesty's life-guards, only to be looked at: to drag our weary limbs through the bewildering mazes of the tortured spot which Mr ——— calls his garden: to wonder at the willows, which torn from the side of their native Thames, now weep (as well they may) over a legion of croaking frogs in a dirty pond, whose scanty springs scarce afford water to cover them: and to admire the ingenuity of this rich relation, who has contrived, at an immense expence, to exclude the prospect of the Thames, by erecting a huge observatory; to shut out Richmond hill, by raising a bank to keep
in

in the water ; and by every whim which folly could suggest, and wealth gratify, to render one of the sweetest spots in the world, detestable.

Perhaps it is rather a misfortune for those whose lot Providence hath assigned among the busy and active, rather than the refined and speculative, to have conversed only with people of cultivated minds, and elegant manners.

Such persons are subjected, by their refinement, to constant disgust ; and are too apt to overlook the kind affections of the heart, when unaccompanied with polite manners, and an improved understanding.

I was both surpris'd and shocked with the behaviour of my city relations. Their extravagant mirth struck me dumb. I was terrified at their wit, overwhelmed with their breeding, astonished at their ignorance,

ance, and sick with their vulgarity. But though forcibly struck with the difference between Mr —'s family, and those friends with whom I am accustomed to converse, the disgust and contempt excited by low breeding, was suppressed by that gratitude which kindness and hospitality awakened.

When we discover real beauties in a piece, we ought to turn our eyes from its blemishes ; and when we are assured the heart is good, we ought readily to overlook what is merely the defect of the head.

Of all the scenes lately presented to my view, none has afforded me so much pleasure as Windsor forest. Is it that its wild beauties resemble those favourite scenes I have so lately quitted, or that the unexpected appearance of such rural objects, amidst a country so populous and cultivated, struck my imagination with peculiar force? Certain it is, whilst I wandered
in

in this enchanting solitude, whilst I reflected that every step I trode was on classic ground, I felt myself inspired with that soft, that ‘divinest melancholy,’ which wraps the soul in a sweet delirium, and seems to raise it above mortality.

On my return, I waited on Mrs Sedley at Richmond. What a striking proof does she exhibit of the insufficiency of wealth to procure happiness—nay of its frequent tendency to destroy it, since there cannot be a greater misfortune than to have all our wants supplied, without exerting either our own talents or industry.

I persuaded her to take an airing last night; but could not prevail with her to join our party on the water: The damps would give her a fore throat; the heat, a fever; a sudden squall might overset the boat; and at any rate, she would expire with fear.

Thus determined on death and destruction, it was in vain to dispute the matter. The meadows of Ham and Twicknam were delightfully verdant; but how lifeless are those pleasures in which no one feelingly partakes with us? It is sympathy that redoubles all our enjoyments.

We drove through part of that wood, ‘which nodding hangs o’er Harrington’s ‘retreat,’ which is fragrant with eglantine and roses, and appears as wild as that at Harwood.

Your favourite bard lies buried amidst those charming scenes, which his pen has rendered still more charming; and they must neither be lovers of nature, friends to virtue, nor votaries of the muses,—in short, they must be absolute strangers to the feelings of a Julia Greville, who can pass the grave of Thomson without a sigh.

I spent the remainder of the evening much to my satisfaction. My uncle came in, and found my father seated in his elbow chair, listening with kind complacency, to a song which he had just declared I sung better than his favourite Gabrielli herself. ‘How like an Eastern Monarch he looks!’ cried my uncle. ‘I am indeed enjoying the highest luxury this world *now* affords me,’ replied this fond parent, with an emphasis that at once swelled and melted my heart. O my friend! how blest am I in being able to give him pleasure! and how great is that I experience, in selecting those tender airs that I know are agreeable to his taste, and particularly those which my dear mother used to sing; and in striving, by all the little arts I possess, to banish at times the remembrance of that loved lamented wife, and after the toils of public business, like her, to welcome him with smiles, back to his quiet home!

But this theme, my Julia, though delightful to me, is unhealthful to your peace. Wherefore I shall bid it, and my beloved friend, adieu.

MARIA HERBERT.

LETTER XXVII.

Miss Herbert to Mrs Helen-Maria Stanley.

My dear Aunt,

London.

As the people with whom you associate, are in general possessed of affluent fortunes, I think you might render an important service to society, could you interest them in a scheme which has long occupied my thoughts, and which was first suggested to them by the following circumstance :—

When my father carried me to visit my friends at S—, I went one morning with a party of young companions, to play in
the

the gardens belonging to the hospital. Tired with romping, I threw myself down on the grass, to taste, at once, repose and coolness. My enjoyment, however, was soon interrupted by the groans of a person in great distress. I started up, and beheld a woman clean and decently clothed, but pale and emaciated, sitting at the foot of a tree, against which she leaned for support.

I approached her; but she took no notice of me. My companions began to crowd around us; their gait seemed an insult on her distress. I entreated them to withdraw.

I sat down by her, and anxiously enquired what was the nature of her complaints? She lifted up her eyes,—the eloquence of misery was in them. She told me she had been afflicted for several years with an internal disorder, attended with

great pain and weakness ; that she had been admitted into the hospital, where every remedy had been tried without success ; and that she was to be dismissed to-morrow as INCURABLE !

This last word, and the manner in which she pronounced it, pierced my heart. Incurable ! repeated I, what then will become of you ? Can I do any thing for you ? ‘ Alas ! ‘ my dear,’ replied she, ‘ God Almighty ‘ alone can help me ! I am unable to work ‘ for my bread ; I have neither the means ‘ of subsistence, the hope of recovery, nor ‘ the prospect of sudden death to alleviate ‘ my misery.’ This was the first time I had heard death mentioned as an object of desire ; I had hitherto considered him as the king of terrors, and with equal pity and astonishment saw him regarded as a friend.

I emptied my pockets of the few half-pence they contained ; promised to enquire
after

after this unhappy sufferer ; went home, told my story—sighed for her misery—and forgot her. I was then under ten years of age. The number of her's I trust are long since summed up, and she at rest in that land, where there is no more ‘ sorrow, nor pain, nor death.’

But though my compassion was suspended, it was not extinguished. It has often been awakened by people in the same deplorable circumstances. We are famed in England, for humanity : Is it not astonishing, that amongst all our public charities, there should be no asylum provided for the most wretched of the human species ? Hope is the cordial of life : how miserable must be their lot to whom ‘ hope ‘ can never come ;’ and who, though the victims of want, and incurable disease, cannot find the refuge of the grave !

I have often and anxiously wished to see some plan concerted for their relief. Unfortunately those who are most able to promote it, are farthest removed from those scenes of deep retired distress, where the miserable require that aid they are unable to solicit. The feelings of mankind must be awakened, in order to stimulate them to action. What then must be done? Description must be substituted in the room of observation.

My dear Aunt! do not think me presumptuous, if I venture to believe that two such obscure people as you and I, might with proper management, set the wheels in motion, which in time might complete the work.

I am not of Voltaire's opinion, who says,
'The English resemble a barrel of ale;
'the top is all froth, the bottom dregs,
'but the middle excellent.' I rather think

we

we are like a cask of wine when properly refined, warm, sound, and cordial to the last drop. But to return to my subject.

—The number of incurables is comparatively small; the diet they require, moderate; the medical attendance they demand, not frequent, as the advantages to be derived from medicinal aid, can only be of a palliative nature. I am persuaded, were a subscription set a-going, there is hardly a school-boy who would not sacrifice a pair of silk stockings, or a girl who would not forego a Sunday's cap, for the pleasure or vanity of seeing their names in the list of those who profess to be the friends of affliction.

We have several such among the Great: Perhaps were the scheme properly represented, we might hope for assistance even from the Sovereign, who glories in being the Father of his people, and whose domestic

mestic virtues in particular, endear him to their hearts.

These imperfect hints I submit to your cooler judgment; the warmth of my heart often raises a mist before mine.

I am conscious many difficulties may arise to oppose its execution; but if there is a possibility of succeeding, let us not be discouraged. The season of action is short; mere speculation, vain: let us not waste the transient hours of life, in pursuits which neither tend to our own improvement, nor the benefit of others; but rather wisely strive to fill it up ‘with all the virtues we can crowd into it.’

Should you begin to form the same opinion of me, that the Curate did (on examining his library) of his friend Don Quixote, even follow the prudent example of that honest man; throw this proof of
my

my infanity into the fire; and instead of vainly striving to reason me out of my project, wait with patience, till a longer acquaintance with the world shall have convinced me, that the wind-mills of Pleasure, the giant Interest, and the enchanter Indolence, are neither to be conquered nor exorcised by the feeble arm of a Miss-errant.

Adieu! your affectionate Niece,

MARIA HERBERT.

LETTER XXVIII.

Miss Greville to Miss Herbert.

Harwood.

I thank my kind Maria, for her well-meant endeavours to divert the course of my melancholy reflections. But misfortunes press so hard on every side, that I often fear I shall sink altogether under the load.

To

To submit, and to exert, are two things very different. I humbly hope, I acquiesce in the will of that Being who appoints all our trials, from a perfect conviction of the goodness and rectitude by which he proportions them to our strength, and intends them for our improvement: But it requires a force and vigour of mind far greater than I yet possess, to struggle against misfortunes, which are daily accumulating, for which I know no remedy, and to which I see no end.

My dear good mother is fast declining. My unhappy father's pressing demands seem to render him desperate; yet none of the plans of œconomy which my mother proposes for retrieving his affairs, meet with his approbation, or even a patient hearing. Ah! why cannot I be silent on this cruel subject? ought not the sacred name of Father to be respected? would to Heaven, Maria, I could feel either respect or affection for
this

this unkind parent ! But I really fear his barbarity to the gentlest, best of wives, and his unmerited severity to myself, will at length entirely eradicate the sentiments which nature planted in my bosom, which duty strove to cherish, but which unkindness has nipt in the bud.

His horses, hounds, and fine house on the forest, have all been arrested by creditors. On this occasion, my mother ventured, though in the gentlest terms, to suggest the necessity of some change in our manner of living ; and proposed with the utmost cheerfulness, to lay aside the coach, and dismiss our two upper female servants. To this proposal he readily agreed ; but the moment she hinted at discharging some of his supernumerary domestics, he became quite frantic with passion ; and told my mother with an air of ineffable contempt, that it did not become a Lady even of her high birth, who brought

nothing into his family but pride and poverty, to dispose of his fortune, or direct his affairs.

I ought to explain this speech, by informing you, that my mother's fortune of L. 5000, was left by my grandfather Lord Belmount, in the power of his son; who was so displeased with my mother's marriage, that he never would give her one farthing. This harsh reproach was the more ungenerous, that my mother lately gave up her jointure, in hopes of accommodating matters between my father and his creditors.

But this is not the whole of my present distress. Amongst the licentious circle who frequent his table, my father lately introduced a Lord Rochdale, distinguished from his abandoned associates, only by a more insinuating address, a greater air of the world, and a less shocking manner of vent-
ing

ing those detestable principles, by which his conduct seems equally influenced.

I could not help being alarmed by the attention with which he distinguished me, from the first moment we met : I thought too, I perceived my father watching my every movement that day, to discover what impression my appearance made on his Lordship. This inspired me with so strong a feeling, of mingled fear and aversion, that I could hardly constrain myself to behave to him with tolerable civility. He perceived my reserve ; and had complained of it, I suppose, to my father, who, on finding me alone next morning in the parlour, affected an air of greater tenderness than usual. ‘ Julia,’ said he, ‘ you are
 ‘ no stranger to the situation of my affairs.
 ‘ Happily, an opportunity now offers, of
 ‘ retrieving them, and saving me. Lord
 ‘ Rochdale loves you ; he is possessor of a
 ‘ fine fortune, and has immense prospects.’

Seeing me look distressed, and ready to interrupt him, he resumed his usual sternness, and continued thus : ‘ If you do not regard your father’s happiness, consult at least your own interest : your’s and your mother’s ruin are as inevitable as mine, should you decline the addresses of Lord Rochdale. Think twice before you determine—another establishment like this, may probably never present itself.’ On saying this, he took up his hat, and without bidding me adieu, retired ; leaving me in a situation scarce to be conceived. I had no time for reflection, or preparing myself for what followed : the door opened, and Lord Rochdale was ushered into the parlour. I strove to recollect myself, and receive him with that politeness, which good manners, and his rank, demanded : But the assured and insolent air with which he entered, and the impudent familiarity of his manner, threw me off my guard, and I treated him with
all

all the haughtiness and resentment of offended modesty. Flushed with security of success, he coloured violently on meeting with a rebuff, for which he was by no means prepared : but pride and meanness are often allied ; with most consummate art, he immediately softened his look and voice, and assuming a suppliant and respectful air, acknowledged his fault, entreated my forgiveness for his presumption, and the boldness of those hopes, which love, he said, alone occasioned ; and which love, he hoped, would one day teach me to excuse.

After pleading in vain the violence of his passion, he endeavoured to dazzle me with enumerating the splendid advantages which I would enjoy, in an union with a person of his rank and fortune.—He was even ungenerous enough to hint at the ruinous situation of my father, in order to give weight to his arguments.

Ah Maria ! how unable are such little souls to judge of those motives that influence noble and ingenuous minds. The very arguments he urged to obtain my compliance with his proposal, were those which would for ever oppose my acceptance of it ; and which deeply wounded my self-love, by shewing me, that he thought me capable of being influenced by motives that could only weigh with the most weak and interested of my sex. Tired out with his disgusting importunity, ‘ I cannot help being greatly surpris’d, my Lord,’ said I, ‘ to hear you expatiate on the happiness of the married state, when no longer than a week ago, I heard your Lordship declare, that none but fools would submit to be shackled?’—‘ My dear Miss Greville,’ replied he, assuming a sprightly air, ‘ are you going to set up for an Inquisitor, and scan our thoughts, and weigh our words?’—‘ I believe, my Lord,’ said I, ‘ to take this charge of your Lord-

‘ ship’s,

‘ ship’s, would prove both a severe and
 ‘ useless penance, and perhaps subject me
 ‘ to more mortification than I deserve.’
 How so ? replied he. Do you really suspect
 me of entertaining any thoughts relating
 to you, that would either mortify or of-
 fend you ? ‘ Indeed, my Lord, I have no
 ‘ intention of making your thoughts the
 ‘ subject of my inquiry, as your words are
 ‘ sufficient to determine my conduct.’ And,
 continued I, in a graver tone, ‘ as I have
 ‘ ever regarded the marriage state as the
 ‘ most happy and respectable of all others,
 ‘ your Lordship cannot be surpris’d at my
 ‘ positively rejecting the addresses of a
 ‘ person, whose opinion on this important
 ‘ subject, he has himself declared, to be
 ‘ entirely inconsistent with my own.’

‘ But you dear little Confessor,’ conti-
 nued he, (familiarily taking hold of my
 hand, which I instantly withdrew), ‘ you
 ‘ forget that it is a part of your duty to
 ‘ absolve

‘ absolve upon sincere repentance, and of
 ‘ your christian charity, to make all possi-
 ‘ ble allowance for me : now, though the
 ‘ speech in question was a little free, it
 ‘ was made over the bottle, which you
 ‘ know is an excuse for every thing.’

‘ With you I doubt not, my Lord; but
 ‘ it is no part of my creed, that the com-
 ‘ mission of one fault makes atonement
 ‘ for a thousand; besides, you know, it is
 ‘ received as a maxim, that in wine there
 ‘ is truth.’

I know not, Maria, how I found cour-
 age to vent all this petulance; I really did
 not think myself capable of doing so : but
 my pride was wounded, and my temper
 irritated, by the insolence of this daring
 libertine.

Just as I ended the last sentence, my
 father returned, and seeing us both, as
 he

he supposed, in high good humour, never doubted that all things were in the train he wished. This mistake, which Lord Rochdale's pride prevented him from rectifying, saved me all further altercation on the subject for three days; but as I carefully avoided Lord Rochdale, my father's error could not be of long duration. Yesterday he was effectually undeceived. Happening to stroll into the garden after tea, I was observed by Lord Rochdale, who immediately quitted his riotous companions, and heated with wine, followed me into the arbour, where I was sitting alone, ruminating on my wretched situation. He approached without ceremony, rallied me on my love of retirement, and with the most disgusting familiarity, attempted kissing my hand, whilst in a tone of passionate impatience, he complained of my unmerited reserve, my unkindly quitting the room the moment dinner

dinner was over, and on every occasion, shunning to meet or converse with him.

‘ I have not the vanity, my Lord,’ said I, ‘ to think my conversation can either interest or amuse you ; nor the dissimulatio-
 ‘ nity to say, that I find either pleasure
 ‘ or instruction in your’s.’—He bit his lip, and affected to smile. ‘ You certainly in-
 ‘ tend me a very great favour,’ continued I, ‘ in the offer you make me of your
 ‘ hand ; my gratitude is proportioned to
 ‘ the value of the obligation : But be as-
 ‘ sured, my Lord, I have too just a regard
 ‘ to my happiness, to entrust it with
 ‘ one whom I see daily sporting away his
 ‘ own ; and for the sake of raising a
 ‘ laugh, (among those whose abuse of the
 ‘ little understanding they possess, renders
 ‘ their applause the most humiliating cen-
 ‘ sure), setting at defiance all laws human
 ‘ and divine, and undermining the very
 ‘ foundations of virtue and good order.’

‘ Nobly

‘ Nobly preached, by Heaven, my little
 ‘ angel! Why, if nothing else will induce
 ‘ you to marry me, your own principles
 ‘ ought; the very love of that virtue and
 ‘ good order, to which your example
 ‘ would make me the sincerest of all con-
 ‘ verts. Believe me, Julia, truths divine
 ‘ drop holier from that bewitching mouth,
 ‘ than from any surplice or lawn-sleeves
 ‘ in christendom.’

I rose to retire, when putting on a more
 serious and determined air, ‘ You must
 ‘ not leave me, Miss Greville,’ said he,
 ‘ I cannot support your indifference, your
 ‘ contempt.’

‘ My Lord,’ I replied in the same
 tone, ‘ our affections are not in our own
 ‘ power; but I never will treat any person
 ‘ with contempt, whom their conduct does
 ‘ not force me to despise.’

I again attempted leaving him ; but he seized my hand, and, with much reluctance on my part, detained me till he had again repeated all he had formerly said on the subject of his detested passion.

I was heartily vexed, and I fear rather rude ; for I told him, that he and his passion were alike offensive to me, and insisted on his never again presuming to entertain me with the disagreeable subject.

He looked very angrily at me for some minutes ; then again softening his voice, ‘ Can you really believe, Miss Greville,’ said he, ‘ that I shall so easily be brought to abandon a scheme on which I had built my hopes of happiness ?’—Your’s and mine, my Lord,” returned I, ‘ are utterly incompatible on this occasion ; and if you really love me as you profess, you will generously forego a scheme which can never be attended with any thing

‘ thing but disappointment.’—‘ If I really
 ‘ love you, Julia!’ exclaimed he, gazing
 on me in a manner that quite terrified me,
 ‘ by Heavens I love you so passionately,
 ‘ that I cannot live without you.’—At this
 moment the audacious wretch had the
 boldness to clasp his arms round me; and
 it required all the force which fear and
 resentment added to my strength, to break
 from him, and hurry towards the house,
 which I did with the utmost precipitation.
 Indeed, Maria, the recollection of this
 horrid scene, makes my heart palpitate
 with terror at this moment.

My father met me in the passage; and
 perceiving my extreme agitation, enquired
 what had occasioned it?

I burst into a flood of tears, and told
 him in what manner Lord Rochdale had
 insulted me. ‘ Insulted you!’ cried he;
 ‘ Do you remember that you are a beg-
 Vol. I. T ‘ gar?

‘gar? Do you suppose that your heroic
‘sentiments, and exalted prudery, are to
‘pass current in the world? No, no,
‘child; it is time to lay aside romances,
‘and think and talk like other people.
‘You must resolve either to receive Lord
‘Rochdale, as my friend, and your husband,
‘or provide yourself lodgings elsewhere;
‘for I will harbour no person
‘under my roof, who pretends to dispute
‘my commands.’ On saying this, he left
me. I struggled to conceal my anguish
from my dear affectionate mother, whose
load of affliction is already insupportable;
but entirely to conceal it, was impossible:
To prevent her from discovering the whole,
I was obliged to reveal a part, and acquaint
her with the proposals of Lord Rochdale,
though not with his behaviour,
nor my father’s comment upon it.

‘My dearest Julia!’ said this best of
women, ‘let my fate be a warning to you.
‘Every

‘ Every species of misery may be support-
 ‘ ed, but that which we bring upon our-
 ‘ selves, by following headlong the im-
 ‘ pulses of our blind passions.

‘ Let no promises of wealth or great-
 ‘ ness, no fears of poverty or neglect, se-
 ‘ duce you from the path of rectitude.
 ‘ To marry a man you cannot esteem, is
 ‘ certain misery : A rake may be reform-
 ‘ ed ; but a libertine in principle never
 ‘ can. Why should my beloved child
 ‘ run so great a risk, as to trust her hap-
 ‘ piness with either ? If no wreck of your
 ‘ father’s fortune shall remain for your
 ‘ support, seek it, my Love, from honest
 ‘ industry. In the discharge of your duty,
 ‘ expect the blessing of Heaven, which
 ‘ alone can make you rich ; and without
 ‘ which, you will be poor in the midst of
 ‘ affluence, and wretched in the most ex-
 ‘alted station. Always remember, that to
 ‘ possess, and to enjoy, are two things ex-

‘ tremely different. Live, then, to your-
 ‘ self, my child, and not to the world :—
 ‘ with that world our connection soon
 ‘ must end ; and even before that time,
 ‘ we shall be thoroughly convinced of the
 ‘ insufficiency of all it can bestow, either
 ‘ to obtain or secure our happiness.’

In listening to this revered parent, I
 seem to listen to the voice of Heaven.
 Yes, Maria ! I will treasure up her lessons
 in my heart ; nothing shall tempt me to
 act in contradiction to its sentiments. Yes,
 though its fondest expectations, its dearest
 hopes, are no more—Oh Rivers ! though
 I must no longer live for thee, I never,
 never will live for another ! Your’s,

JULIA GREVILLE.

LET.

LETTER XXIX.

Miss Herbert to Miss Greville.

London.

I have received both your letters, my Julia! for which I sincerely thank you.

Amidst a variety of distressing circumstances, what consolation ought it to carry to the heart of my friend, that by her filial tenderness, and virtuous conduct, she is lessening the weight of calamity, and soothing the inquietudes of a mother she fondly loves!

To smoothe the last scenes of declining life, is a gentle and benevolent employment, and peculiarly suited to a temper like your's. Like all other duties, it carries its reward along with it, in the sweet complacency it diffuses through the soul;

but when humanity is prompted by gratitude, and endeared by affection, the exercise of duty becomes the most exquisite enjoyment.

I am highly gratified by your account of your spirited behaviour to the infamous and contemptible Rochdale. Vice seldom fails to degrade, as much as Virtue ennobles the human mind : And it is happy for mankind, when it throws off all disguise, and appears as in Lord Rochdale, with all its native meanness and deformity.

You pain my heart, by accusing yourself, in your former letter, of impatience under your distresses. My amiable Julia ! just and indulgent to all besides, you are most severe and unjust to yourself. Heaven requires that we should acquiesce with humble resignation in its decrees ; but it does not forbid us to wish for the possession of
happiness

happinefs it has denied, or to desire exemption from sufferings it has inflicted.

The involuntary shrinkings of nature, under the heavy preffure of affliction, will never furely be imputed to us as criminal.

You fay, ‘ that you are grieved to difcover that misfortunes, inftead of blunting the edge of your feelings, have increafed your fenfibility to a degree of which you formerly had no conception.’ But why fhould this afflict my friend ?

How infinitely fuperior is the love, the friendfhip, the gratitude, the devotion of an exquisitely feeling heart, to the languid emotions of a cold, phlegmatic, infenfible foul ? I grant, indeed, that a perfon endued with extreme fenfibility, is thereby expofed to peculiar pains ; but religion and philofophy will greatly mitigate them, and by checking the over-indulgence of this difpofition,

disposition, prevent the dangerous effects it might produce. We ought to remember too, that the same constitution of mind which exposes us to severe suffering, capacitates us also for most exquisite enjoyment.

Indeed a stagnation of feeling, seems of all others that state which the human mind feels most difficulty in supporting. And so intolerable is that apathy into which extreme distress often plunges the children of misfortune, that (as Young perhaps too strongly expresses it) ‘ they would almost ‘ thank misery for a change, though sad.’

My dearest Julia, how happy do you make me by the assurance that my letters help to beguile your heavy hours ! May I live no longer than whilst I continue sensible of your merit, grateful for your tenderness, and worthy of that preference by which you distinguish me ! which gives me importance in my own eyes, will obtain
for

for me the regard of others, and, through life, add a relish to all the enjoyments of your admiring grateful friend,

MARIA HERBERT.

LETTER XXX.

Miss Greville to Miss Herbert.

Harwood.

THE ardour of your attachment, my dear Maria, merits a return far different from that which my languid heart is able to make to it. How sadly changed is your friend, from what you once knew her! How changed to me, alas! the whole face of creation, the whole prospects of life! Wherever I turn my eyes, a dismal gloom invests every scene; the very soul of Nature seems annihilated; and of all those animated and beautiful objects that once delighted me, nothing but the lifeless shadows now remain.

Though

Though years are stealing on apace, the cold hand of Time would not so soon have extinguished the ardent flame of youthful enthusiasm. Grief, Maria, has exhausted the vigour of my soul, and like an untimely frost, blasted all those buds of hope and joy, which ought to have adorned the Summer, and enriched the Autumn of my days!—How severe is my lot! condemned to look back with anguish, and (with respect to this life) forward without hope: unable to interest myself either in the pleasures or business of life, yet exposed continually to its most mortifying distresses.

Much do I wish habitually to consider myself as a Pilgrim, whose business is not to seek rest or pleasure on the road, but diligently to hasten towards his home; who ought not to sink down under his burden, nor suffer himself to be greatly disturbed, though incommoded, or even harrassed,
on

on a journey, which is every hour drawing nearer to a close!

I write at present in the Alcove, the scene of the happiest and most painful moments of my life: the remembrance of the painful often returns, but the pleasing are gone for ever. With what exquisite sorrow do I contemplate every surrounding object, still, still associated with the idea of the most engaging, but most faithless of mankind! Here, whilst I listened with delight to his vows of fond affection, I forgot that any of the human race could be unkind. Ah Rivers! what killing anguish, what endless regrets, have my own credulity, and thy perfidy, treasured up for me! I know, Maria, I might conceal my deplorable weakness from you; ‘but tho’
 ‘with others it is sufficient to be sincere,
 ‘in not appearing what we are not; yet
 ‘with our friends, we ought to throw all
 ‘reserve

‘ reserve aside, and appear such as we
 ‘ really are.’

Lord Rochdale continues to persecute me with his odious addresses. How strange, how inconsistent, is that haughty sex ! No aversion can be more strongly marked, than that I feel for him ; yet he still professes love, extravagant love for me ! He offends, he disgusts me every moment ; yet I ought to remember, that a man entirely destitute of delicacy and generosity, can have no idea of the degree in which these may subsist in another ; and consequently may deeply wound, where he does not so much as intend to hurt.

How different a character is that of our old play-mate Sally Dormer !—I cannot express to you how much I have been affected this morning, by the singular generosity and attachment of that excellent girl, whose birth entitled her to a better station,

station, than that in which her misfortunes have placed her.

Ever since her father became bankrupt, she has lived here as maid to my mother; but her good sense, and superior education, have made me treat her always as a companion.

Observing her frequently of late in tears, and fearing she might be apprehensive of losing a small sum which is in my father's hands, I began this morning to assure her, that whilst my mother lived, this should not be the case. She burst into a flood of tears—' Oh! my dear Miss Greville,' cried she, ' can you believe me capable of bestowing a thought on myself, when I see your excellent mother in such affliction? She told me we must part, because she cannot afford to keep so many servants; but I will do the work of two

Vol. I. U ' servants

‘ servants—I will serve for nothing—I
‘ never will leave her.’

Then, grasping my hand, she sobbed aloud. ‘ Oh pardon my presumption! I
‘ cannot speak what I meant to say—
‘ Have the goodness to carry this to my
‘ dear Lady: It is her own—indeed, in-
‘ deed it is: I received it all in gifts from
‘ her; and now she may want something—
‘ I require nothing.’ She ran out of the room, and left me with astonishment to take up her purse, which she had let drop at my feet, and in which I found thirty guineas. I would not pain a mind so noble, by absolutely refusing her gift; but instantly following her into her own apartment, I embraced her with tears of gratitude, and told her I should keep her purse, and use it without scruple, if ever our necessities should require us to do so.

Ah,

Ah, Maria! what are the boasted and so much coveted distinctions of power, rank, and affluence, compared with the possession of a soul like Sally Dormer's?

Farewell, my kind, my sympathizing friend! Your letters are my only amusement, my only consolation. The expressions of your tender affection penetrate my soul; like the breeze of Summer on the bosom of the lake, they gently agitate without ruffling it; the emotions they excite, are equally pleasing and healthful. Farewell! I know it is as unnecessary to solicit the continuance of your friendship, as to assure you of the inviolable attachment of your friend,

JULIA GREVILLE.

LETTER XXXI.

*Miss Lucy Herbert to Mrs Helen-Maria
Stanley.*

My dear Aunt,

London.

THERE is a principle of liberty in my nature, that cannot brook restraint; place what is usually my greatest pleasure in the light of a duty, and in a twinkling inclination flies off at a tangent, as your learned parson Parsnip would say.

Here has Lucy been dunning in my ears for eight days, write—write—write. Now, my dear aunt is not to learn, that writing is often as little in our power, as loving or hating, or any other mental operation. But though I can turn a deaf ear to her remonstrances, I cannot bear your reproaches.—And can you indeed believe it possible, that I should ever forget—that I should cease to love you? No!

by

by these presents, I am resolved to convince you—that still I love you—even in dulness love you. There are two styles of writing which at present I could adopt with equal ease—the philosophic, and the frivolous. Were I to reply to your last in order, I must necessarily choose the former; but my natural bias towards the latter, is determined by the arrival of the old Countess of S——, who at once supplies a subject, and will assist me in handling it.

I am out of all patience with this antiquated Dowager, who, without asking permission of any one, has taken upon herself the office of Chaperon to the ignorant country girls; and shaking with zeal, like a mandarin on a mantle-piece, assumes the whole direction of our dress, equipage, &c.

Figure to yourself the pleasure of being surveyed every day from top to toe by a pair of pig's eyes, squinting from under a huge cape, like a tortoise out of its shell; and ushered into every public place, by a pair of shoulders as high as the Alps, and crowned like them with a front of eternal snow.—But, in pursuance of your advice, I strive to find ‘some good in every thing,’ and flattering myself that this old evergreen may serve by contrast to heighten the charms of the roses and lilies with which she is surrounded, I pay her assiduous attention.

See what deference I shew for your favourite virtue Prudence! But though I scorn to make a boast of my own merit, I must be bold to say, my friendship for her is purely disinterested; since, except on this occasion, I never was indebted to her in my whole life.

After

After all, I cannot see why being within a hundred and fifty degrees of kindred, should give fools and impertinents, an indisputable right to torment one.

For my part, I love no friends but such as leave me mistress of my time, and have sense to perceive that company cannot always be agreeable.

I was carried yesterday to view the British Museum; a title bestowed on a fine palace filled with broken jars, headless busts, cracked urns, tattered parchments, smocked mummies, hunch-backed monkeys, toads, serpents, and alligators.

Ever since viewing this strange medley of things most extraordinary in nature, and admirable in art, my neck and eyes have ached, and my brain teemed with monsters.

From

From thence we adjourned to the exhibition of the Royal Academy, where I was peculiarly delighted with the pictures of Angelica Kauffman, who is certainly one of the most elegant artists of this age ; and I am assured that the same delicacy of mind, and sensibility of heart, which guide her choice of subjects for her pencil, and are strongly marked in the execution of them, appear both in her letters and conversation.

I am really proud of the rank our sex at present hold among the professors of the fine arts.—You, my dear aunt, possess one more valuable than the whole—the divine art of Contentment. And such is the engaging sweetness of your temper, and winning complacency of your manners, that I may venture to affirm, in a right Hibernian stile, that if all old maids were like you, there would be no old maids at all.

What

What an unreasonable world do we live in! (I can moralize as well Maria). Was ever any thing more unjust, than to affix a term of reproach on a woman, for what she has taken every lawful means to prevent,—which she considers as her greatest misfortune,—and which, by malice itself, can never be construed into a fault?—When a few months longer residence here has qualified me to assume the airs of a woman of fashion, I shall certainly endeavour to banish from the world that spiteful and unmeaning term *Old Maid*. For the term *old*, indeed, I see no use in the English Vocabulary. You may sometimes meet an old woman begging charity in the streets; but at the park, the play, the opera, all women are alike young, all wear the lilies and roses of fifteen.

Farewell! When mine decay, may their fading charms be supplied by the most beautiful of all ever-greens—Good-humour!

Mean-

Mean-time, to follow your instructions,
and practise what you teach both by pre-
cept and example, shall be the daily study of

Your affectionate Niece,

LUCY HERBERT.

LETTER XXXII.

*Mrs Helen-Maria Stanley to Miss Lucy
Herbert.*

Stanley Farm.

I am flattered most agreeably, my dearest Lucy, by the reception you gave my former letters, as well as the earnestness with which you urge me to continue our correspondence. Your epistles contribute greatly to my entertainment; at the same time, I am led to suspect, from the colouring which your imagination bestows on every object, that fancy still at times leads reason astray, and that you are still tempted to abuse that fine understanding with
which

which Heaven hath blessed you, by sacrificing your humanity to your love of ridicule.

Though I know my dear girl would revolt with horror from the idea of deliberately injuring a fellow-creature, yet she is not aware how materially she may do so, by giving scope to the flights of her lively imagination, and painting the infirmities of others, in a light so striking and ludicrous, as cannot fail to make a lasting impression, and give so unfavourable an idea of characters, perhaps truly worthy, as can never afterwards be eradicated.

Nothing but vice should be made the subject of ridicule, and that with the view of rendering it contemptible. Against vice, then, let the sharpest arrows of satire be pointed; — there, to see them wound deeply, would give me sincere pleasure.

It is to be lamented, that mankind in general shew more contempt for folly, than indignation against vice. Yet the one usually proceeds from weak intellects, and therefore is chargeable only on Heaven; the other often from the abuse of superior talents, and consequently renders us highly culpable ourselves.

The effects of folly, too, are commonly most hurtful to the foolish themselves. Those of vice are not only ruinous to the vicious, but often involve the innocent in extreme misery, and extend far beyond the sphere of our limited knowledge.

For the future, then, my Lucy, pity and conceal the frailties of your species. Despise, deride, and even detest their vices; but ever be it your care, by the exercise of love and charity, to promote the spirit of true benevolence, and the happiness of society.

I shall conclude these thoughts, thrown together at your request, with part of a discourse on Ash Wednesday, from the sensible intelligent Bishop of ——.

‘ The best way to dispose ourselves for becoming what we ought to be, is to get a clear idea of what we are. Forgetful of the motives which influenced them, we judge of our actions by their success, and often triumph when we ought to be ashamed.

‘ Self-love prompts us to flee from every view of our character that would give us pain : But on whatever parts of it we feel greatest reluctance to dwell, there we ought to make the strictest scrutiny ; and there, that scrutiny will be most likely to produce those penitential sorrows, whose fruit is sincere repentance.’

Before quitting Sunday subjects, let me remind my dear Lucy of the promise she made me with regard to the approaching festival. It is dangerous, on any pretence whatever, to neglect the celebration of the positive institutions of our holy religion. Carelessness and indifference grow upon the mind, in consequence of such omissions; and the convictions of the understanding will ever be found to have but a feeble influence on the conduct, unless aided and confirmed by the affections of the heart. The duties of religion have a powerful tendency to fit us for the duties of life; and therefore a multiplicity of affairs furnish the strongest arguments in favour of those sacred institutions, by which pious sentiments are awakened, and moral obligation enforced. My dear good girl, farewell! I need not tell you that you are beloved with all a mother's fondness, by your affectionate aunt,

HELEN-MARIA STANLEY.

LETTER XXXIII.

Colonel Rivers to Captain Stanley.

Charlestown.

How unfortunate for me is your removal! Never, Stanley, did I regret your absence more sincerely than at this crisis. How often have you envied me the happiness of possessing the affections of the person on earth most dear to me. O my friend! I am no longer an object of envy. A prey to the most tormenting apprehensions, my mind is a scene of frightful confusion.

Thrice since you left Charlestown, have I written to my Julia, without receiving a single letter in return; though mine to my father, sent by the same conveyance, have been regularly answered.

Stanley! what can I think—what ought I to believe? In this dreadful suspense, I can only fear.

When I reflect on the situation of my angel—of my distance from her—of ten thousand possible—nay probable distresses in which at this moment she may be involved, my heart is torn with the most distracting apprehensions. Why cannot I fly to her relief? What can this world afford me, if deprived of my Julia?

From one source of misery I have been hitherto exempted,—from doubts of her fidelity, in whom my soul confides. But now—O Stanley! what horrid shapes does fancy assume to torment me!

It constantly presents to my eyes—a severe tyrannical father,—a too submissive and irresolute mother,—a powerful insinuating rival,—a timid friendless desponding victim. Gracious Heaven defend my Love! and grant me relief from this torturing suspense!

Write

Write to your aunt, I entreat you, without a moment's delay, and try to obtain from her some information concerning the situation of the family at Harwood. Though the misconduct of its possessor places a bar between him and his most respectable neighbours, yet as I remember to have seen your aunt there, she may be able to give us the intelligence we wish.

Farewell! You know you are at all times secure of the esteem and affection of

GEORGE RIVERS.

LETTER XXXIV.

Mrs Helen-Maria Stanley to Capt. Stanley.

YOUR letters, my dear nephew, are always received with pleasure; and by the promptness of my reply to the last, you may judge how desirous I am of the continuance of your correspondence.

Were I inclined to profit by the occasion, you have laid yourself very open to my raillery, by the earnest manner in which you beg to be informed of every particular concerning the family at Harwood. But an event which is soon to take place, has at once so surpris'd and grieved me, that nothing is more foreign to my thoughts at present than gaiety.

I hope, my dear Harry, you have no nearer interest in these inquiries, than what arises from humanity, and concern for an amiable and unfortunate girl. Unfortunate I must term her, whom any motives whatever can influence to purchase rank and riches, at the expence of peace and happiness; and surely Miss Greville must forfeit both, the instant she enters into the most solemn of all engagements, with a man of so abandoned a character as Lord Rochdale.

I had frequently of late heard the report of this marriage; but from the high opinion I have ever entertained of Miss Greville, could not suffer myself to believe it possible. Last week, however, I was convinced of its truth.

Having gone to call on Mrs Greville, and not finding her daughter with her, I enquired after her, and learnt that she was in the garden taking her evening walk. I was obliged to return home soon, so proposed to join her there for a few minutes; but by the time I had reached the end of one of the walks, I perceived her and Lord Rochdale sitting in a little arbour, and engaged in a very earnest conversation. I immediately returned to Mrs Greville, and was scarce seated when her daughter entered, and on perceiving me, appeared in the greatest confusion. I took no notice of this, because nothing I think

can

can be more rude or ill-timed than raillery on such a subject.

Next day your father dined at Mr Lovell's, who you know is a near relation of Lord Rochdale's, and heard him affirm that he was to marry Miss Greville in less than a fortnight.

Nobody can be more surprised at this match than I am ; but such is my esteem of this amiable young creature, that I will not venture entirely to condemn her conduct, till I am better qualified to judge of her motives.

I am sorry you do not approve of my taste in the choice of your seal ; the more so as I had piqued myself on making Socrates the door-keeper of your thoughts.

You alledge his serious countenance will restrain your gaiety. Be assured I meant
not

not to put a seal on your gaiety, but to give a sanction to it; since I never knew a thought come from your heart, even in its lightest moments, that would not have obtained the approbation of that amiable philosopher; nor will you, I am persuaded, ever utter one in his company, that would make him ashamed to shew his face. Happy were it for virtue and science, if their votaries were at more pains to cultivate the social feelings; and if the innocent cheerfulness of their manners shewed that happiness was the fruit of their several pursuits.

Glory at present is your's; may you be successful, and give pride as well as pleasure, to the heart of

Your affectionate Aunt,
HELEN-MARIA STANLEY.

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LETTER XXXV.

Miss Herbert to Miss Greville.

WHY delays my Julia to write to her friend ; the friend to whom she has so long confided every sorrow of her heart ? Heaven knows how deeply I feel them, how anxiously I wish to relieve them !

My friendship for you, my dearest Julia, is not (as Seed says) ‘ a cold and sedentary principle.’ Nor can I rest satisfied with the conviction that I am always esteemed, and sometimes remembered by you. No : my heart requires some kind of intercourse with those I love ; some pleasing interchange of attentions ; some mutual expressions of complacency, by which the sacred flame of amity is nourished and kept alive.

I am charmed with the singular generosity of your excellent Sally.

Mankind,

Mankind, my friend, are dazzled by the splendour of great actions, and suffer those that are good to pass unnoted and unrewarded : But there is an eye that perceives the motives of our actions ; there is a hand that registers the most trivial of them ; and a day fast approaches, when the secrets of all hearts will be revealed. At that grand, that eventful consummation, how different will be our judgments of what is now passing on this shifting scene ! How shall we despise, as illusive shadows, unworthy of the regard of an immortal being, those empty honours, those dangerous riches, those unsatisfying pleasures, which here are so eagerly pursued at the expence of everlasting felicity ! How shall the lustre of what men call great, fade before the light of what God calls good !

These important distinctions are familiar to the penetrating thoughts of my Julia : With singular, with superior goodness,

ness, she joins that sweetness and modesty which render it graceful and attractive. The language of your life, my admirable friend! is more eloquent and persuasive in the cause of virtue, than all the arguments that reason can supply: The latter carry conviction to the understanding, but the former deeply interest the heart.—Forgive me if I pain your's, by thus unreservedly expressing what I feel. Yet, why pain you? Has not Heaven constituted praise to be the reward of virtue. and to have a powerful influence in stimulating mankind to the practice of it? Is not the generous soul conscious of an elevating pleasure, whilst indulging itself in offering this tribute to worth? And would you deny me this pleasure, or do you reckon me incapable of tasting it?

Farewell, dearest Julia!—Let the frequency of my letters convince you, that you continually occupy my thoughts,—
and

and the tenderness of my friendship obtain
for me the continuance of your's, which
is esteemed the first of blessings by

Your devoted

MARIA HERBERT.

LETTER XXXVI.

Colonel Rivers to Captain Stanley.

Charlestown.

AT length, my friend, all my hopes of
happiness in this life are blasted for ever.

Powerful Heaven! and do I live to tell
you, that Julia Greville, the idol of my
doating soul, the friend, the mistress to
whom every thought of mine was con-
fided, who so tenderly shared—so fondly
repaid my affection, is ere this time the
wife of another. The wife! O Stanley—
I am distracted! the wife of the infamous
Rochdale!

Vol. I.

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You,

You, I know, will still affirm that it is impossible. My friend—it is true. This very morning the dreadful intelligence was conveyed to me by her insolent unpitying father, who not only assures me that the marriage is to take place, but that it is entirely a matter of free choice with his daughter.

Rochdale! the mean—the contemptible Rochdale—the choice of Julia! It cannot be. Or if it were really so, why should her father write to me? Why accuse me as the controulér of his daughter's inclinations? O Heavens! it is too plain. I have no longer any interest in her heart, else our mutual secret would never by her have been confided to a father, whose authority she well knew would immediately have been interposed, to prohibit all intercourse between us.

At

At times, my weakness is such that I distrust the evidence of my senses. My soul catches at a bare possibility, and for a moment I fancy I have been in a dream. I have even resolved a hundred times to throw up my commission, return to England, and claim that hand which is mine by the most solemn engagements. Claim her hand, whilst her faithless heart—in spite of tenderness unequalled—of vows awfully sacred—is ungratefully alienated—is basely bestowed on another! No Stanley! my soul disdains the thought.

And can it really be, my friend? Can those eyes that beamed tenderness—that heart which throbbed at my approach—those lips which confirmed my happiness, a thousand thousand times; can they be thus deceitful, thus perfidious? O Stanley, it is—it is impossible! Julia, my injured angel, forgive me!————

In continuation.

After four hours passed in agonies inconceivable, I sit down to tell my friend, with a more composed, though most unhappy mind, that I have not now one doubt remaining.

The obstinate silence which Julia has so long observed, in spite of my entreaties, and most tender remonstrances, sufficiently proves that increasing indifference for me, which at length has been succeeded by preference for another. Rank—splendor—riches—she has been unable to withstand. Unhappy Julia! will these fill up the frightful void which the absence of love will occasion in your joyless soul?

When I reflect on the despicable character of him she has distinguished with her preference, I know I ought to blush for my tenderness, and feel every sentiment annihilated, in contempt for her choice of my worthless rival.

But

But our sentiments, my friend, are not to be changed as suddenly as our opinions. Regret, eternal regret, must mingle with my resentment. Resentment! perhaps she is more worthy of my pity!—Perhaps she is herself deceived in the character of him she is about to call husband. O Stanley! every way I look, there is misery. Would it were permitted me to put a period to that and my existence together!

What to me are all those splendid advantages; that fame, affluence, and distinction, so fondly coveted, so nearly possessed? O! what are these to a heart sickening even to death with disappointment?

And why may not death be my refuge, when life is become insupportable?

Pardon, my friend, the ravings of my distracted soul. I know, that Being from whom my existence was derived, and

whose laws I was early taught to venerate, can alone recall the gift he bestowed, and dismiss me from the station his wisdom has appointed.

But nature cannot long support such agonizing conflicts as those I suffer. A little while, and death, the refuge of the miserable, will for ever obliterate every painful remembrance.

Farewell, my friend! Excuse my weakness, and pity my sufferings; for you can do nothing more to relieve the wretched

GEORGE RIVERS.

LETTER XXXVII.

Miss Greville to Miss Herbert.

Harwood.

WHEN, O when, Maria! shall I cease to address you in the stile of hopeless sorrow?

row? Alas! I must either be silent, or in return for all your generous cares to soothe or divert my thoughts, overwhelm your gentle heart with the enumeration of evils, which every day increase, and for which there appears no possible remedy.

Last week my father's creditors met; and enraged at his constant delays, agreed on bringing his estate to an immediate sale. One of the Gentlemen present told the rest, that a young friend of his, who was just come from his travels, and had succeeded to an immense fortune, was looking out for a purchase, and would probably give the preference to this neighbourhood, on account of its vicinity to the Grove; he having been formerly acquainted with Lord Cleveland's family, and my Lord having been appointed one of his guardians by his deceased father. This Gentleman accordingly wrote to his friend, whose name is Sir Charles Mortimer,

mer, and who immediately set out from London, in order to take a survey of Harwood.

When the two Gentlemen arrived, my father was abroad ; and my dear mother being much indisposed, I was obliged to receive them, and do the honours of the house. Never was I less able to undertake the task. My spirits were so exhausted, that I could hardly speak ; and when I did so, my eyes filled with tears, and my heart grew so full, I was every moment in danger of betraying its distress, by my emotion.

The strangers seemed struck with my appearance ; and the melancholy silence with which Sir Charles in particular regarded me, increased my confusion, by shewing me that my attempts to conceal my affliction had been unsuccessful. To deliver myself from this painful restraint,
and

and the burden of forcing conversation, I proposed to accompany the Gentlemen into the garden, from whence they could have a view of the river, pleasure-grounds, woods, &c. During our walk, my attention was roused by the manner and conversation of Sir Charles, which accorded perfectly with the singular gracefulness of his person, and a countenance impressed with a serious sweetness, that had something in it extremely interesting.

A modest self-possession, an elegant address, and a superior manner of treating the most common subjects, convinced me that his understanding was excellent, and that he had been accustomed to associate with none but the very best company. Nor was our conversation wholly confined to general and indifferent topics: Sir Charles expatiated on the pleasures and advantages of a country life, and on the charms of domestic happiness, and social intercourse,
in

in a manner so judicious and animated, as proved him to have a heart capable of relishing their refined delights.

It was late before my father returned; yet I had no reason to complain of the tediousness of the hours. The conversation of this Gentleman, so sensible, polite, and every way different from that to which I was accustomed, beguiled my time so agreeably, that I was surprised when the bell rung for dinner. When the conversation became general, I sunk into my usual pensiveness; I even felt more sad than usual.—Ah Maria! cannot you divine the cause? The tender, the polite attentions of Sir Charles, the sighs that seemed to steal from his bosom as often as he looked at my dejected countenance, the softened tone of his voice when he addressed me, all, all recalled to my mind—what I ought for ever to have banished from it, but strive in vain to forget! How
hard

hard is my fate, Maria ! Resolute in discharging my duty, I struggle to drive the unworthy cause of my constant inquietude from my thoughts ; but though in every other instance, our exertions to become virtuous, tend to make us not only more virtuous, but more happy, in this, alas ! by struggling to forget, we only more deeply rivet both our sorrow and our weakness.

As soon as dinner was over, I arose to retire as usual ; but Sir Charles, who sat next me, entreated me to favour them with my company a little longer, in so earnest a manner, that though I excused myself on account of my mother being alone, I added, that if the Gentlemen chose coffee, I would be very happy to meet them in the drawing-room. This speech seemed to give great satisfaction to my father, who, contrary to his constant practice, abandoned his bottle, and attended the Gentlemen to the drawing-room,
about

about an hour after I left them. They then walked out to view the grounds, with which Sir Charles seemed quite charmed ; and my father told me that he had invited himself to dine again next day, in order to have some private conversation with him on the affair. Sir Charles came very early ; and as my father rides out every morning, I was again called on to entertain him. My former opinion was confirmed, and my esteem even increased by this second interview. The respectful attention with which he treated me, gave me a feeling of self-satisfaction and importance, so different from that of wounded delicacy, and mortified pride, to which I was accustomed, that the natural cheerfulness of my temper conquered in some measure the depression of my spirits ; and though I could not entirely shake off my uneasiness, my conversation was easy and unembarrassed.

On

On my father returning, Sir Charles politely expressed his regret, that business for a while must take place of pleasure; ‘but I will flatter myself, Miss Greville,’ said he, ‘that my good fortune to-day, in finding you disengaged, is only a prelude to many other agreeable conversations, with which, I hope, you will honour me in these delightful scenes.’ I curtsied, and withdrew.

The moment Sir Charles was gone, my father came into my mother’s apartment, with looks of the highest satisfaction, and told her, ‘that Heaven had surely sent some good Angel under the form of this stranger, for the preservation of him and his family.’

After many apologies for an inquiry, which Sir Charles assured my father was not the effect of a rude or impertinent curiosity, he begged to be informed what

was his real motive for parting with so beautiful a place as Harwood? My father made no scruple to acquaint him with the embarrassed state of his affairs; when Sir Charles, with a generosity very singular in one entirely a stranger, offered to lend him ten thousand pounds to pay off his most pressing debts; and taking security on the estate, to let it remain still in his possession, provided that by a stricter œconomy in future, he could contrive to live there comfortably with his family. My father embraced the offer with transport, and in two days the affair was concluded.

Is there not something wonderfully perverse in the human heart, Maria? A week ago, I thought Sir Charles one of the most agreeable men I ever met with; I conversed with him, with all the ease of an old acquaintance: Now, a painful sense of obligation, an awkward reserve, a timidity, an apprehension—Oh Maria! pity
the

the weakness of your friend, she is ashamed of it herself;—yet this Sir Charles!—
I will lay down my pen.

Were it not that I think it an essential duty of friendship, to discover my heart to you in all its weakness, I certainly would destroy the last sentence. Is it not, Maria, like the foolish and girlish vanity of fifteen, to suspect every man who treats you with attention, of having serious designs on your heart? Those paid me by Sir Charles, were probably the effect of humanity alone; at least of that good-breeding, which leads men, when there is only one woman in company, to distinguish her by more than common civility. I will endeavour to think thus, for to think otherwise would render me most unhappy.

Sir Charles has just been here, and introduced to my dear mother, whose complaints have sensibly abated since she saw

my father look pleased and happy. Prepared by his generous conduct to admire Sir Charles, every moment seemed to confirm her first impressions of his character : They conversed together ; but a certain air of diffidence and restraint, was visible in the manner of my dear parent. Something was spoken of generosity—of obligation ; but Sir Charles instantly interrupted her, ‘ To me, Madam,’ said he, ‘ belongs this language ; the friendship of this family will a thousand times repay any little service it may be in my power to render them. I know of no advantages wealth can bestow, if it is not that of atoning for the injustice of fortune, by rewarding real merit, or removing the inquietudes of those we esteem. Alas ! the worst calamities are those which lie beyond the reach of its influence.’

My

My heart, with a deep sigh, assented to the truth of this observation; Sir Charles fixed his eyes on me with a look of tender compassion, while painful consciousness covered my cheeks with blushes.

My mind is somewhat easier since I was relieved from the presence of the odious Lord Rochdale.

The death of an aunt, to whose fortune he succeeds, has obliged him to leave the country, and set out immediately for London; it is a scene much more suitable to his taste, and I sincerely hope will have such powerful attractions for him, as will prevent his returning hither.

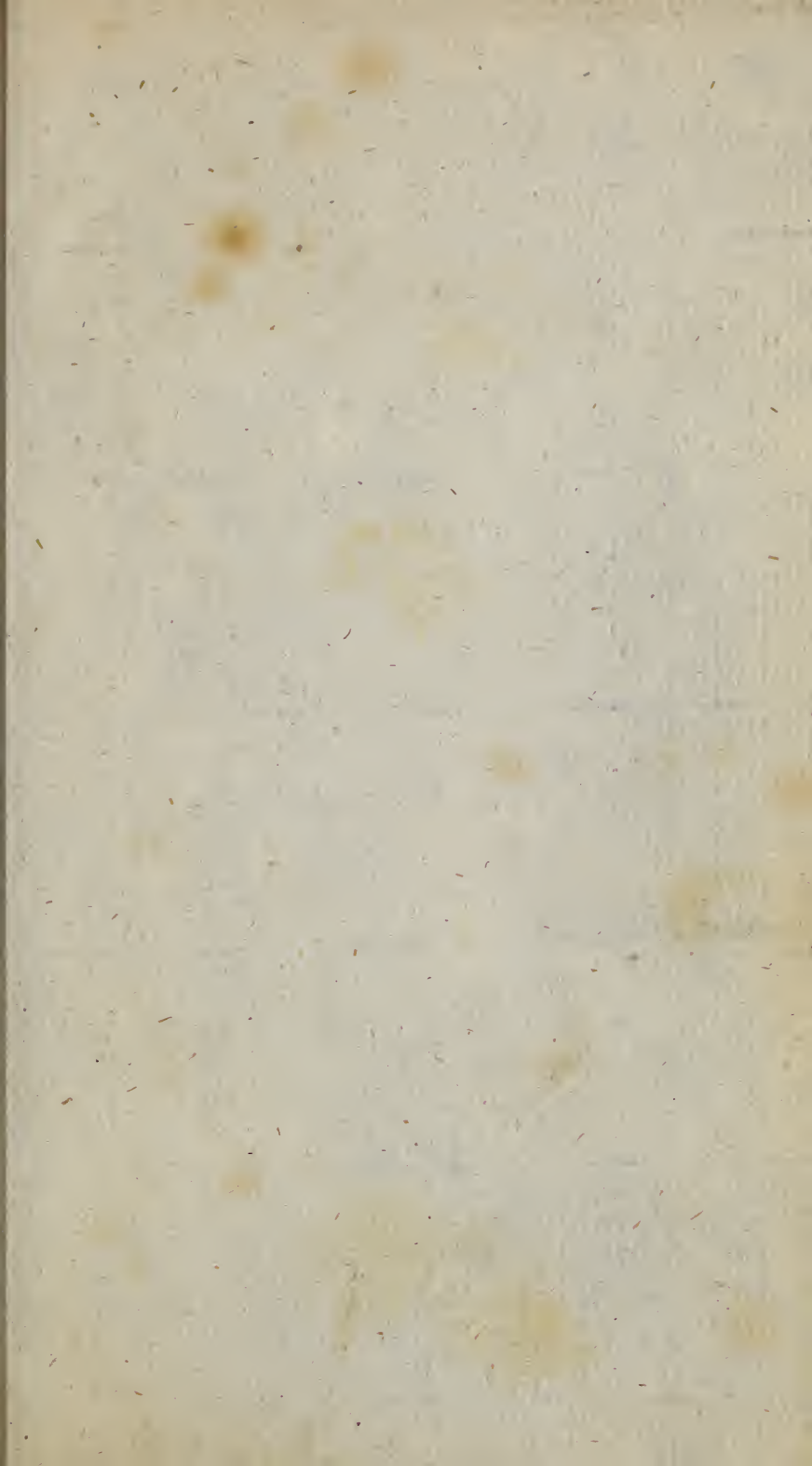
I thank you cordially for writing so frequently. It is not alone for the ‘ banished lover or absent maid’ that Heaven has taught letters, and inspired man with
the

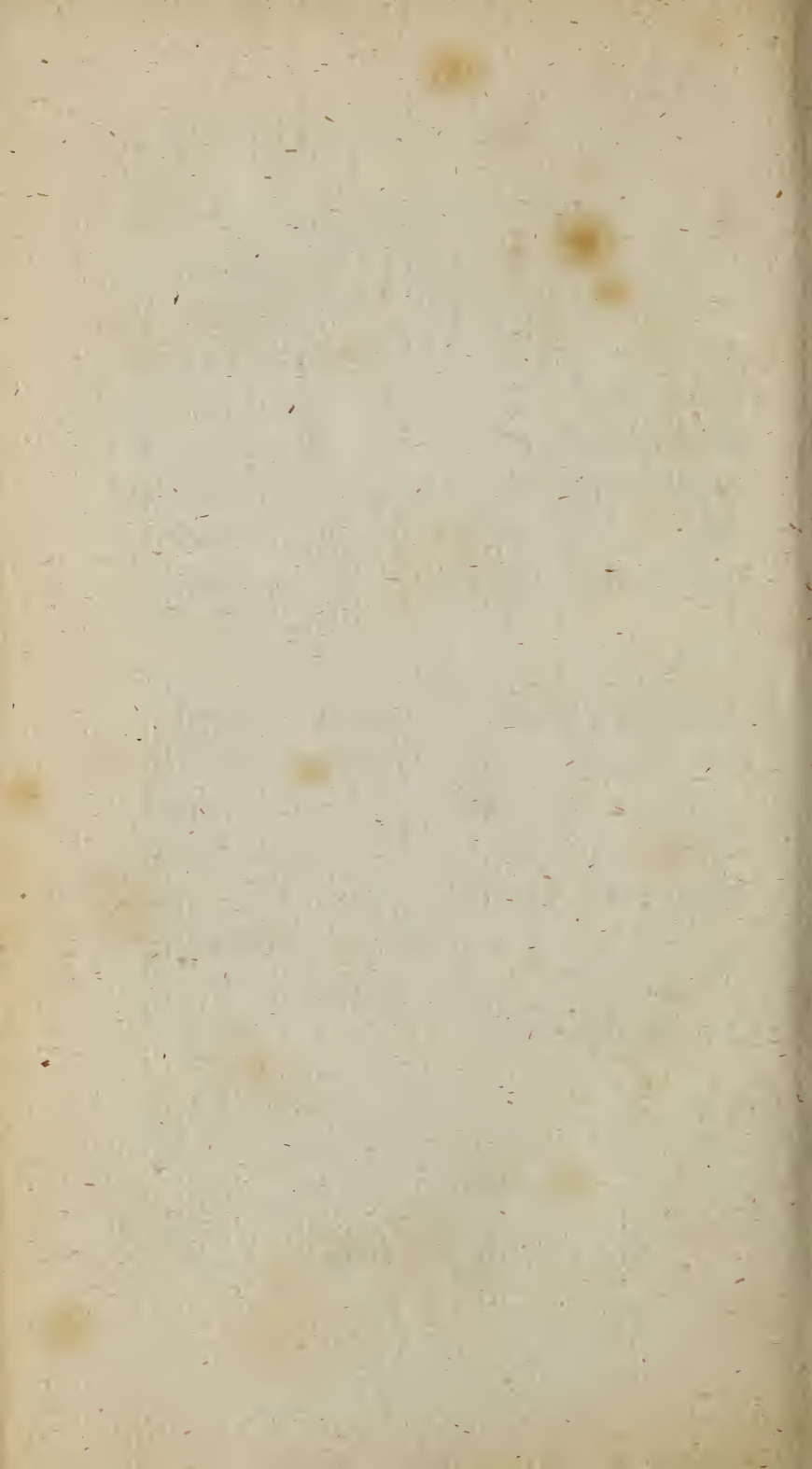
the art of communicating his thoughts to different nations and distant ages. Surely this invaluable gift was allotted him, to expand the social and benevolent feelings of his heart, to extend the influence of his own virtues to others, and derive pleasure and improvement from the communication of theirs:—advantages, which without the aid of letters, he never could have enjoyed.

Improve, then, this valuable privilege, my dear Maria! Describe to me all you hear, and see, and think: Let me enjoy the pleasing conviction, that neither novelty, gaiety, nor grandeur, have power to banish from your heart,

Your real—your faithful friend,

JULIA GREVILLE.











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